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ABSTRACT

This ethnic heritage unit is about Lithuanians in the United States. The first section presents basic facts, such as a map of Lithuania, map of Eastern Europe, facts about Lithuania, principal dates in Lithuanian history, Lithuanian historical figures, bibliography about Lithuanians, and a list of Lithuanian organizations in the United States. The second section discusses early Lithuanian settlement in North America and some traditions about Christmas, folk celebrations, and Easter. The third section offers information about Lithuanian immigration to America, Lithuanians in the labor force, and Lithuanian cultural continuities in the United States. Cultural patterns in Europe and the USSR are presented in another section in light of 20th century Lithuanian Americans, Lithuanians in the economics field, and historical consciousness. The next section presents Lithuanian community organizations and the Lithuanian independence day celebration as conflicting interests within the United States. The last section discusses the challenge of an interdependent world by focusing on Lithuanians for a free Lithuania, Simas Kudirka, Lithuanian language, Saturday schools, parish schools, and Lithuanian English-language publications. Each section is divided into two parts--one denotes the theme of contributions of Lithuanians to American life and/or their integration into American life and the second part refers to the relationship of Lithuanians to Lithuania and/or their retention of ethnicity in the United States. (ND)

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LITHUANIANS IN AMERICA

Contributions to America
Integration into American Life
Relationship to Homeland
Retention of Ethnicity in America

ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ
LIETUVAI
УКРАЇНЦІ

ETHNIC HERITAGE IN AMERICA

Project Director:

Daria Markus

SO 009585

Curriculum Materials in Elementary School Social Studies on Greeks, Jews, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians

Title IX Project of The Chicago Consortium for Inter-Ethnic Curriculum Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS*

BASIC FACTS

Map of Lithuania 1
Map of Eastern Europe 2
Basic Facts About Lithuania 3
Principal Dates in Lithuanian History 4
Lithuanian Historical Figures 5
Bibliography 6
Lithuanian Organizations 7

EARLY SETTLEMENT OF NORTH AMERICA

A.

EArly Lithuanians in America** 9

B.

Lithuanian Christmas** 15
Lithuanian Christmas Tree Straw Ornaments 21
Lithuanian Folk Celebration 24
Lithuanian Easter 29

BUILDING A NEW NATION

A.

Lithuanian Immigration to America** 31
Lithuanians in the Labor Force 39

B.

Lithuanian Cultural Continuities** 47

CULTURAL PATTERNS IN EUROPE AND U.S.S.R.

A.

Twentieth Century Lithuanian Americans** 49
Lithuanians in the Economic Field 54

B.

Lithuanian Historical Consciousness** 57

CONFLICTING INTERESTS WITHIN THE NATION

A.

Lithuanian Community Organizations** 63

B.

Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration** 69

THE CHALLENGE OF AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD

A.

Lithuanians for a Free Lithuania** 73
Simas Kudirka 80

B.

The Ties That Bind - Language** 82
Lithuanian Religious Ties 87
Lithuanian Education - The Saturday Schools 89
Lithuanian Education - The Parish Schools 91
Lithuanian English Language Publications 93

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Part A denotes the theme of Contributions of Ethnic Groups to American Life and/or Integration of an Ethnic Group into American Life

Part B refers to the theme of Relationship of an Ethnic Group to Homeland and/or Retention of Ethnicity in America

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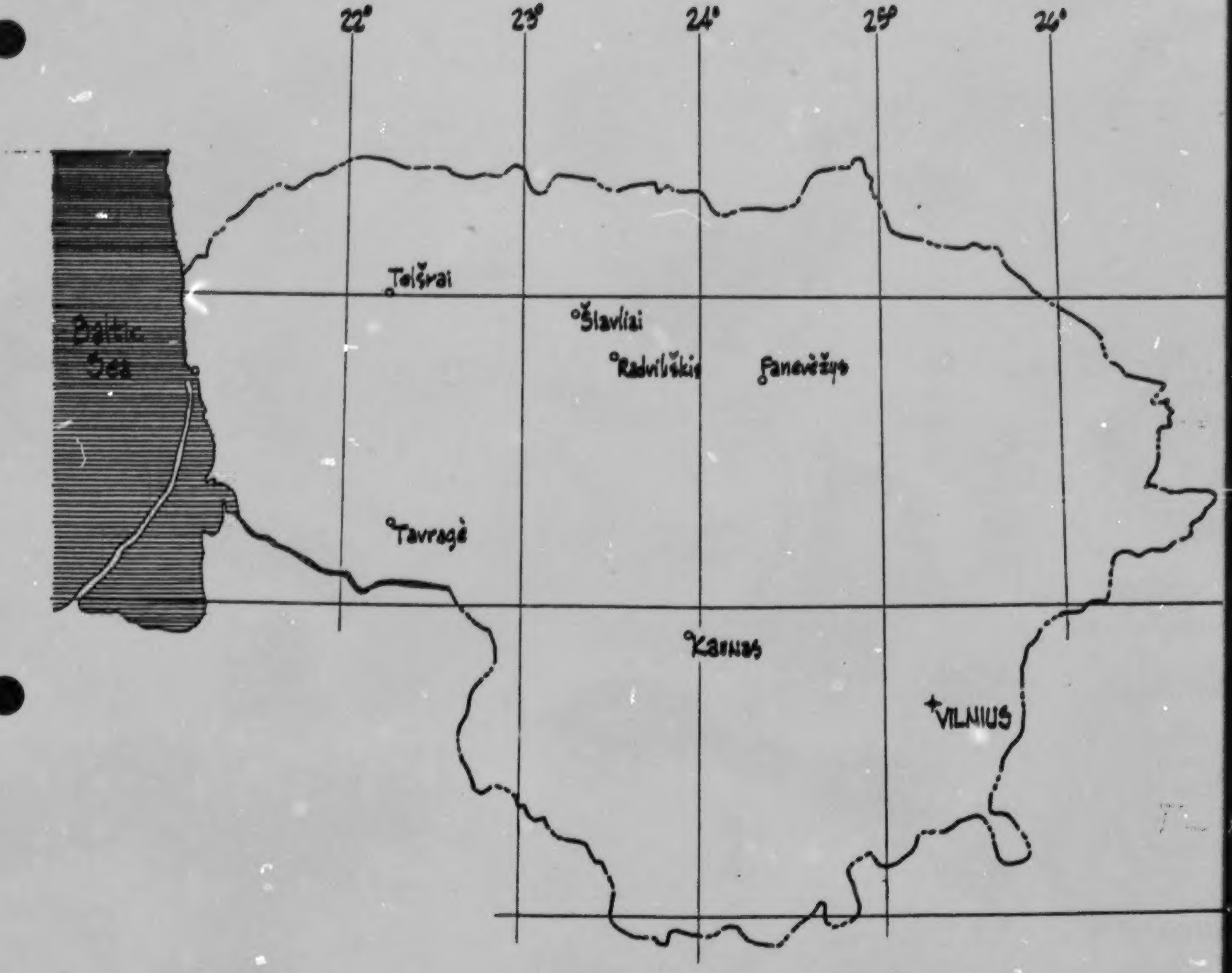
This denotes the main lessons which can be used comparatively with similar lessons for the other three ethnic groups.

BASIC FACTS ABOUT LITHUANIA AND LITHUANIANS IN AMERICA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23°
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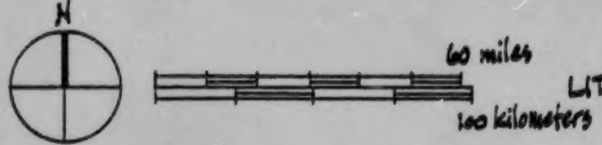
Tauragė
Kaunas
VILNIUS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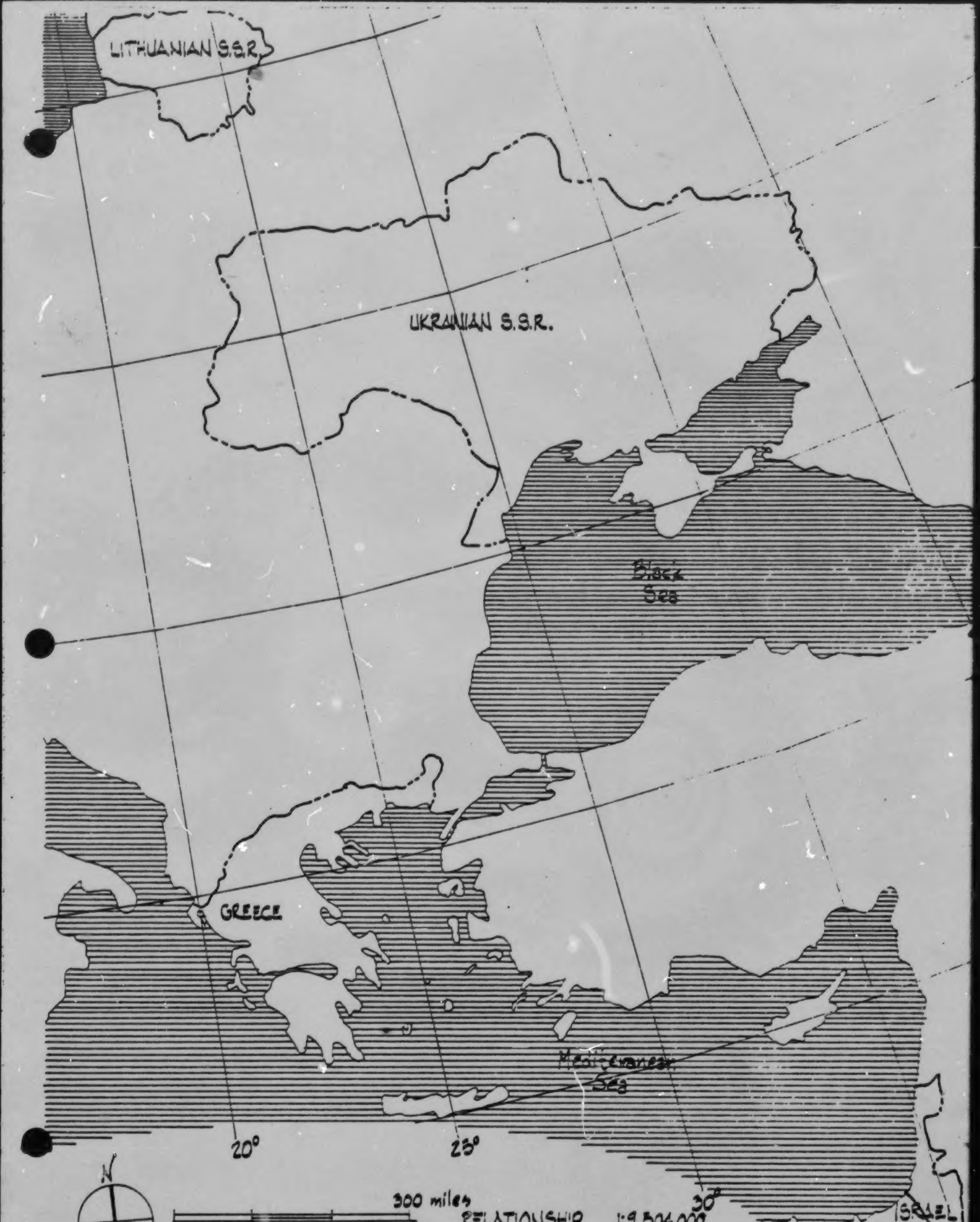
LITHUANIAN S.S.R.
UKRANIAN S.S.R.
Black Sea
GREECE
Mediterranean Sea
ISRAEL
20°
25°
30°
N
300 miles
500 Kilometers

RELATIONSHIP 1:9 304 000

BASIC FACTS ABOUT LITHUANIA

Official name: L.S.S.R. Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Area: 26,173 square mil (65,200 square kilometers)

Neighbors: North - Latvia, East - Russia, South - Belorussia, Southeast - Poland, Germany.

Population: 3,234,000 in 1973.

80.1% Lithuanians
8.6% Russians
7.7% Polish

1.5% Belorussians
.8% Ukrainians
.8% Jewish

Capital: Vilnius, population 409,300.

Major cities: Kaunas (pop. 332,400)
Klaipeda (pop. 155,000)
Sauliai (pop. 103,200)
Panevezys (pop. 84,000)

Topography: Varied. No mountains but many hills with exception of 3 flatland areas; Baltic sea area, middle and southeast Lithuania. East consists of approximately 2000 lakes. Lowlands (Žemaitija) in northwest and highland (Aukštaitija) in south.

Climate: Average 20°F in winter. 60°F in summer.

Resources:
Natural: Forests of oak, birch, aspen trees
Mineral: Gypsum, calcium, granite, clay, sand, gravel, peat
Agricultural: Rye, wheat, flax, sugar beets and potatoes
Animal: Dairy cattle, hogs, horses, moose, fox, wood buffalo and small game

Industry: 60% agricultural production

Education:
Vilnius - 8 high schools, 1 conservatory of music, 1 art institute, 1 University of Vilnius, 1 pedagogical institute.

Kaunas - 1 agricultural institute, 1 veterinary school, 1 polytechnic institute, 1 medical institute

Siauliai - pedagogical institute

National Flag : Horizontal stripes of yellow, green and red.

State Emblem: Vytis - a mounted knight on a field of red.

National holiday: February 16th - Day of the Restoration of Lithuania's Independence.

PRINCIPAL DATES IN LITHUANIA'S HISTORY

1251	Establishment of Lithuanian kingdom, a Christian monarchy under the rule of King Mindaugas.
1270-1569	Gediminas dynasty ruled also by Algirdas, Kestutis, Jogaila and Vytautas.
1569-1795	Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth.
1795-1915	Lithuania under Russian rule.
1915-1918	Lithuania under German occupation.
1918-1940	Restoration of Lithuania's independence.
1940	Soviet invasion of Lithuania and forced incorporation of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R.
1941-1944	Armed revolt against Soviet government and restoration of Lithuanian government - German invasion and occupation.
1944-1952	Lithuanian guerilla warfare against the Soviet occupation forces.

LITHUANIAN HISTORICAL FIGURES

Maironis-Jonas Mačiulis (1862-1932) - National poet

Jonas Basanavičius (1851-1927 - A leader of national reawakening

Bishop Motiejus Valančius (1801-1875) - A leader of national reawakening

Vincas Kudirka (1858-1899) - A leader of national reawakening. Author of national anthem.

Mikalojus Kastantas Čiurlionis (1875-1911) - Composer, artist and musician

Antanas Smetona (1874-1944) - First and Fourth Lithuanian Republic President

Mindaugas (1236-1263) - First sovereign ruler of Lithuania. Crowned 1253

Juozas Lukša-Daumantas (1921-1951) - Underground guerilla leader

Vincas Kreve-Mickevičius (1882-1954) - Leading writer

Dr. Juozas Girnius (1786-) - Leading philosopher

Mykolus Krupavičius (1885-1971) - Restoration of independent Lithuania. Leading politician. Founder of Lithuanian American community.

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Sužiedelis Simás, Ed. Encyclopedia Lituanica. Boston, Mass., 1970.

Lithuanian encyclopedia.

Stepas Zobarskas. Lithuanian Folk Tales. New York, Voyages Press, 1963.

Lithuanian stories.

Dr. Antanas Kučas. Lithuanians in America. Boston, Mass., Encyclopedia Lituanica, 1975.

Detailed account of Lithuanian experience in America from 1659 to the present.

Algis Ruksenas. Day of Shame. New York, David McKay Co., Inc., 1973.

Narrative account of Simas Kudirka who wished to defect and attempted to board the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant, but to no avail.

Dr. J. Savasis. War Against God in Lithuania. New York, Manyland Books, 1966.

An historical account of religious persecution under Soviet rule in Lithuania.

Albert Gerutis. Lithuania 700 Years. New York, Manyland Books Co., 1969.

Historical collection of works by foremost Lithuanian historians and scholars. From origin, resistance, liberation to prospects.

Barbara Armonas. Leave Your Tears in Moscow. Lippincott, Philadelphia, Pa., 1961.

Translation of Siberian tragedies.

Rimvydas Šilbajoris. Fourteen Contemporary Writers. University of Oklahoma Press, Oklahoma, 1970.

Collection of literary works by leading contemporary writers.

V. Stanley Vardys. Lithuania Under the Soviets. New York, F.A. Praeger, 1965.

Political analysis of Soviet occupied Lithuania.

Rt. Rev. Brizgys. Religious Conditions in Lithuania Under Soviet Occupation. Lithuanian Catholic Press, Chicago, 1975.

LITHUANIAN ORGANIZATIONS:

Lithuanian World Community, Inc.
6804 South Maplewood Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60629

Consulate General
Hon. Josephine Dauzvardis
6147 South Artesian Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60629

Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania
29 West 57th Street
New York, New York 10019

Lithuanian American Council, Inc.
2606 West 63rd Street
Chicago, Illinois 60629

Lithuanian American Committee of U.S.A.
708 Custis Road
Glenside, Pennsylvania 19038

United Lithuanian Relief Fund of Lithuania
2606 West 63rd Street
Chicago, Illinois 60629

Lithuanian Foundation, Inc.
2422 West Marquette Road
Chicago, Illinois 60629

American Lithuanian R.C. Federation
6623 South Fransisco
Chicago, Illinois 60629

National Lithuanian Society of America, Inc.
8780 96th Street
Woodhaven, New York 11421

Lithuanian Catholic Youth Federation - Alteitis
1634 Wouth 49th Avenue
Cicero, Illinois 60650

Lithuanian Youth Association - Santarą-Sviesa
6349 South Artesian Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60629

Rt. Rev. Vincent Brizgys
2701 West 68th Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60629

ART GALLERIES - MUSEUMS:

Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
4012 South Archer Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60632

Ciurlionis Gallery of Art
5620 South Claremont Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60636

FOLK ART STORES:

Gifts International
2501 West 71st Street
Chicago, Illinois 60629

LITHUANIAN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTERS:

Jesuit Fathers (Youth Center)
5620 South Claremont Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60636

Draugas Publishing Company
4545 West 63rd Street
Chicago, Illinois 60629

PUBLICATIONS:

Lituanus (Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences)
6621 South Troy
Chicago, Illinois 60629

Lietuvių Dienas - Lithuanian Days (Monthly Illustrated)
4364 Sunset Blvd.
Hollywood, California 90029

Vytas - Knight (Catholic Youth Monthly)
2520 West 69th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60629

EARLY SETTLERS

EARLY LITHUANIAN SETTLERS IN AMERICA

Related topics:

New Amsterdam
Circuit riders
American Civil War

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: EARLY LITHUANIANS IN AMERICA

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. name four Lithuanians who came to the United States before the American Civil War.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

The diversity of cultures within the United States has been evident since the early days of North American settlement. Sometimes the oft-recurring sounds of the English language and the legacy of English common law have seemed to deny the multi-cultural realities of American life. Nevertheless, observers of the American scene, whether journalists or visiting noblemen, have noted the variety of peoples and cultures throughout America before as well as after the Revolution. Enough Germans lived in Pennsylvania by the 1750's to cause serious discussion in the legislature over the merits of German as an official language; Swedes on the Deleware and Dutch on the Hudson each made permanent contributions to "American" architecture; at the time of Washington's inaugural in 1789 Negroes comprised the second largest ethnic group in the nation.

The settlement of diverse peoples was not limited to the Atlantic seaboard. French trading posts dotted the interior from Michilimackinac to

New Orleans; Spanish missions raised the cross and the arms of Aragon and Castile from Florida to Texas and California; fur-trading stations and fishing villages inhabited by Russians and Ukrainians stretched along the Alaskan coast southwards to San Francisco Bay. Throughout this vast territory the American Indian lived in diverse ways—some, like the Iroquois, the Cherokee and the Hopi in farming villages; others like the Cheyenne and the Sioux, combined agriculture and hunting economies.

As time passed, the number and variety of cultures in the United States increased. Newcomers from central, northern, southern and eastern Europe became conspicuous. Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos and other Asians crossed to the western shores. Still later came a great exodus from Mexico, Central America and the islands of the Caribbean, Puerto Rico and Cuba.

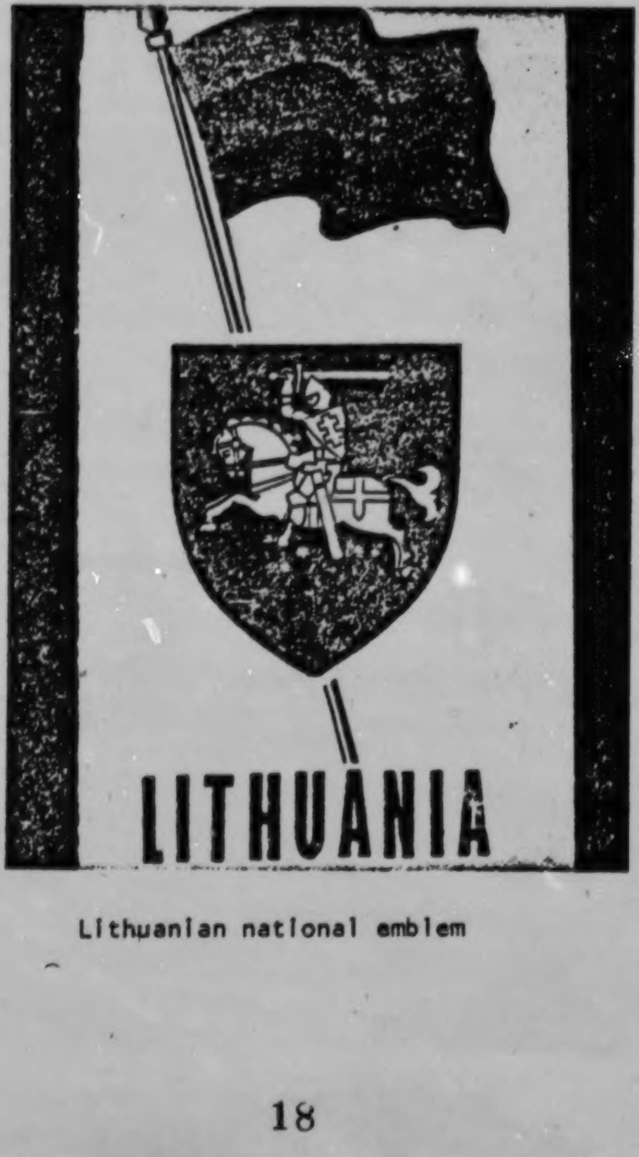
In their old homeland most of these different peoples had little experience of the outsider. Almost everyone within the home village shared the same language, religion, traditions and values. Here, however, heterogeneity rather than homogeneity was the rule. In this new land diverse families and cultures flourished, sometimes in precarious harmony, sometimes in open conflict, yet all lived under the guarantees provided by a constitution which promised equal protection under the law. The presence of these different cultures helped to contribute to the rich variety of traditions and values present in American society today.

Bridge questions

1. At the time of the Declaration of Independence, what other ethnic groups lived here besides the English?

2. What new groups arrived by the time your grandfather was born (1900-1920)?

3. What new groups of people have come here in large numbers in your own lifetime (1962-1976)?



Lithuanian national emblem

EARLY LITHUANIANS IN AMERICA

While the first substantial immigration to the United States did not start until 1868, individual Lithuanians began to reach the shores of the New World along with the earliest settlers. For example, historians speculate that there may have been Lithuanian craftsmen in the group of colonists brought over by Captain John Smith to Virginia in 1608.

Perhaps the earliest Lithuanian to come to New York (New Amsterdam) was Alexander Carolus Cutius. He came as the result of a direct invitation by Governor Stuyvesant to teach Latin to young boys. For his labor Curtius received a salary, a plot of land for a garden, and a permit to give private lessons. Arriving in June 1659, Curtius took over the headship of the colony's first school, as well as serving as the colony's first doctor of medicine.

Among the courageous band of circuit riders who cared for the spiritual needs of pioneers on the American frontier was Prince Demetrius Gallitzin, a member of the royal Lithuanian Gediminas family. At Baltimore in 1795 he was ordained a Roman Catholic priest—the first Lithuanian to be ordained in the United States. On the frontier this Lithuanian priest was known as "Father Smith." The town of Gallitzin, Pennsylvania has been named in his honor. Above his burial tomb there is an etching which portrays a traditional Lithuanian knight.

Two other Lithuanians, Alexander Bielaski and Henry Kalusauskas, came to America after having participated unsuccessfully in the 1831 Polish-Lithuanian uprising against Russia. Bielaski, who had deserted from the Russian army, earned acclaim for his heroic exploits against the Russians, escaping first to France then to the United States, settling in Springfield, Illinois. Befriended by Abraham Lincoln, he fought under General Grant in the American Civil War.

Kalusauskas, who also took part in the same uprising aginst Russia, represented the Lithuanian revolutionary committee in France before emigrating in 1838 to the United States. In 1863, when a new revolt was about to erupt in his homeland, the Polish and Lithuanian independence movement chose him as their representative in the United States.

While it is impossible to determine the actual number of Lithuanians who fought in the American Civil War, a careful reading of the Civil War lists reveals over 500 surnames of Lithuanian origin.

Suggested activities

Ask the students to make a list of things they would take along if they were going to move to a foreign country. Tell them that they would be able, obviously, to get food and clothes in that country, but no American books, records, typical recipes, etc. Discuss their lists and the reasons for choosing certain objects. Ask them if they would prefer to give up everything that is familiar to them and to adopt totally the way of life in that country. Ask the students if they would want to go to live in another country, if they did not have to do it. Discuss their answers probing the reasons why they would or would not want to do it and under what circumstances they would leave their country. Point out that the early American colonists faced similar problems.

Evaluation

1. Name two early Lithuanian settlers in America.
2. What contributions did they make to life in their new country?
3. Many American towns and cities (like Gallitzin, Pennsylvania) have been named in honor of an early settler or explorer. Look on a map of the United States and see if you can discover other towns which were named in this way. What nationalities do these names represent?

CONTINUITIES IN ETHNIC IDENTITY

LITHUANIAN FEASTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Related topics:

Festive foods
Lithuanian legends

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: LITHUANIAN CHRISTMAS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe how Lithuanians celebrate Christmas.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

When a person, a family or a group of people move from one place to another they carry more things with them than are listed by the moving company or inspected by customs officials. Their race, language and ethnicity are in most cases as obvious as their personal property. Perhaps less obvious, and perhaps more significant, are their values, traditions, ceremonies, and celebrations. European immigrants to the southern hemisphere have carried the Christmas tree and the yuletide fire even though Christmas there occurs in the summer. Similarly, ethnic groups have brought to the free society of the United States traditions and ceremonies which have endured hundreds, even thousands of years of persecution in the old country. These traditions and ceremonies are continued in a different physical and political environment for varied reasons. They help to define the group as a people—to provide an answer to the question: "Who are we?" "Who am I?" They provide some meaning in a generally chaotic world. They hold people together, providing security and a sense of belonging. They say: "This is where we have been. This is what we have done. This is what we value."

Bridge questions

1. Give one example of a holiday or tradition which has been brought to America by immigrants.
2. What obstacles do immigrants face when they attempt to transplant a holiday over a distance of thousands of miles and establish it in an alien land?
3. Choose one American holiday as an example. Describe how it is usually celebrated—the essential part and meaning of the holiday. How would you go about transplanting the essence?

LITHUANIAN CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve is one of the most important family holidays of the Lithuanians. It is a day of peace, good will, religious recollection and intimate family reunion. The entire day before Christmas is spent in preparation for Kučios (Christmas Eve) and Kalėdos (Christmas Day): the home is cleaned thoroughly, the kitchen is filled with the tantalizing aromas of holiday food. Members of the family fast all day. After their chores are done, they scrub in the Pirtis (steam bath) and don holiday garb.

Kučios or Christmas Eve dinner is the highlight of the day. The table is spread with hay as a reminder of Christ's manger, and covered with a handloomed snow-white linen cloth reserved for the occasion. A crucifix and a plate of holy wavers (plotkelės) are placed in the center of the table. The Kučios dinner is commenced after the evening star has appeared in the sky. The head of the family begins the meal with a prayer of thanksgiving for all the blessings of the year past and with a wish that the family remain intact during the ensuing year. He breaks and shares the plotkelės with each member of the family, and they in turn with each other.

The meatless menu consists of 12 courses (in memory of the 12 apostles), soup, fish, vegetables, šližikai (small hard biscuits served with poppy-seed milk), kisielius (oatmeal pudding), etc. The meal is leisurely with conversation centering on the significance of Christmas. Dissensions and arguments are avoided, for the atmosphere surrounding the coming of Christ must be one of absolute peace and goodwill.

Because of the mystic aspect with which the evening is endowed, traditions, superstitions, legends abound. It is considered the proper time for foretelling the future. Straws are drawn from under the tablecloth, the length of the straw determines the length of life, or to the young folk—the length of their single life: long straw, long life; long straw, long single life. Girls carry kindling wood into the house to count: an even number of sticks indicates marriage during the coming year. Molten lead, wax, or fat poured into cold water foretells the future by the shapes it forms. The children run frequently to the well to taste the water, to see if it has changed into wine, or run to the stable to eavesdrop on the animals, for at one mystic fleeting moment on Christmas Eve, at midnight, the water is supposed to change to wine and the animals will have the power to converse in the tongue of man.

In some sections of Lithuania, the table is not cleared of food, for it is believed that the Christ Child and His Mother might pay the home a visit during the night, or that the souls of deceased family members might return briefly—they must find some semblance of hospitality. The floor is swept several times so that not even a crumb remains on the floor, over which the night visitors might stumble.

The hay from under the tablecloth, together with bits of food is always brought out to the animals in gratitude for their work and loyalty, and because animals in the stable had guarded and kept warm the Babe at Bethlehem.

The family makes all efforts to attend the Shepherd's Mass (*Pimenėlių Mišios*) at midnight.

Kalėdos (Christmas Day) is spent in feasting and merry-making, with rounds of visits to neighbors by the young people. Before being granted admission to a home the visitors are required to sing a Christmas or folk song. Gay folk songs and Christmas carols, vigorous folk dances and frequent samplings of home-made foods, cider and ale are the order of the day.

Source: Josephine J. Dauzvardis, The Lithuanian Lore Lady.

The convent of St. Casimir in Chicago

Suggested activities

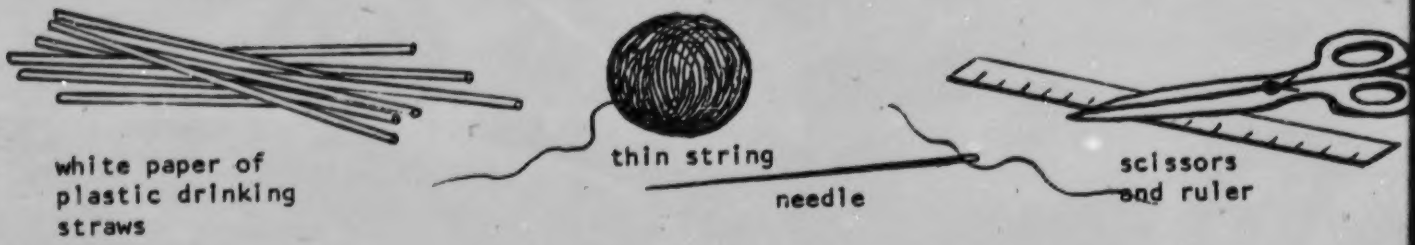
Ask students to name any holiday that has originated in America and what these holidays celebrate or what is the meaning of these holidays (e.g. Lincoln's birthday, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving). If they were Americans living abroad, would they continue to celebrate these American holidays, even though the holidays have no meaning to other people in the country? For instance, would you as an American living in London, try to have a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving? Would it do any harm to the English people? What would it mean to you, as an American, to celebrate that feast in England? Would the meaning of the holiday be different if you had the celebration in a country where you did not hear your language spoken—for example, in Spain, Italy, or Greece?

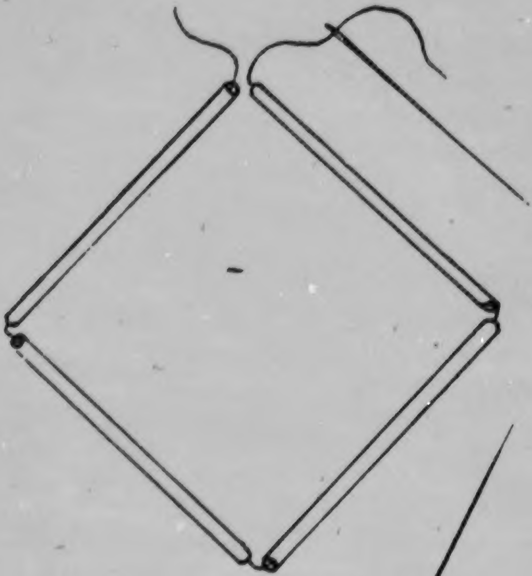
Evaluation

1. What are the Christmas Eve customs of Lithuanians?
2. When do Lithuanians go caroling?
3. How do you suppose Lithuanians celebrate Christmas in the United States? Which of the customs described here would they be able to keep? Which would be difficult to continue?

LITHUANIAN CHRISTMAS TREE STRAW ORNAMENTS

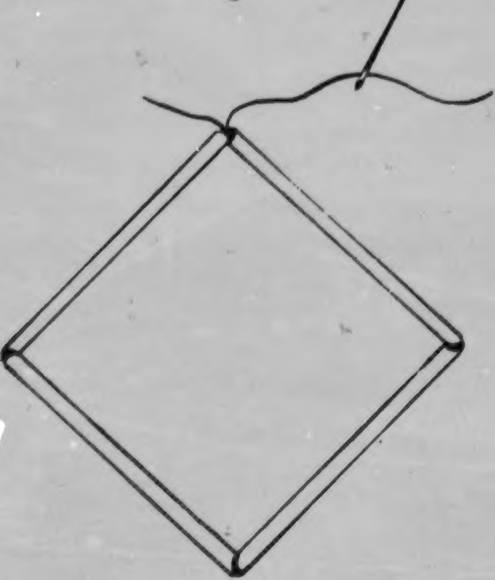
To make a straw ornament you will need


white paper of plastic drinking straws
thin string
needle
scissors and ruler

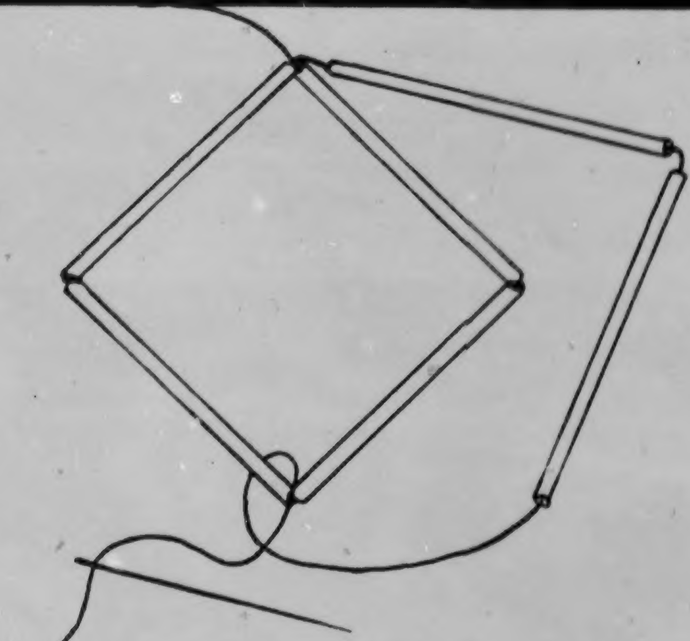


Step 1
Cut eight peices of straw 4" long each and four pieces of straw 3" long each. Threat needle using about a yard and a half of string.

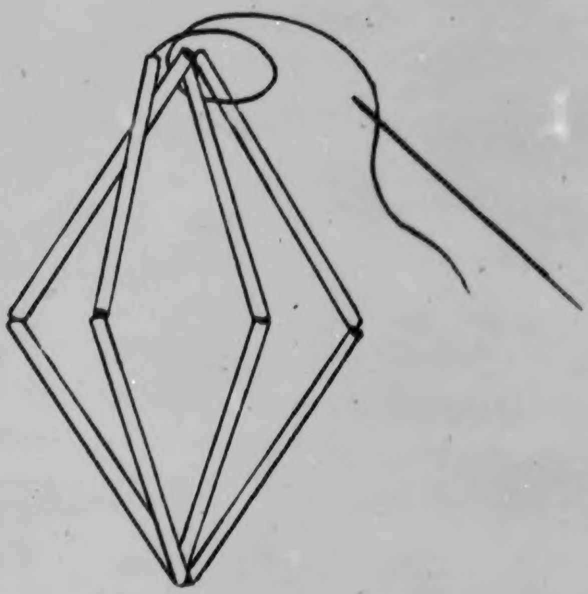
String four pieces of 4" straws on a string. Leave enough string on end to tie a knot.



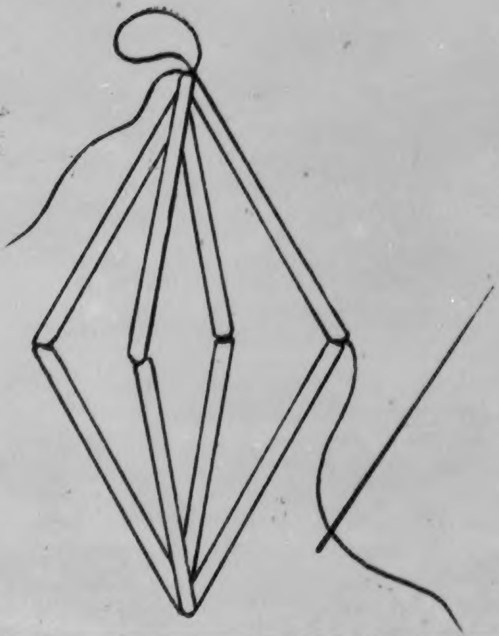
Step 2
Tie straw snugly together as in the diagram. Do not cut the string until the ornament is complete.



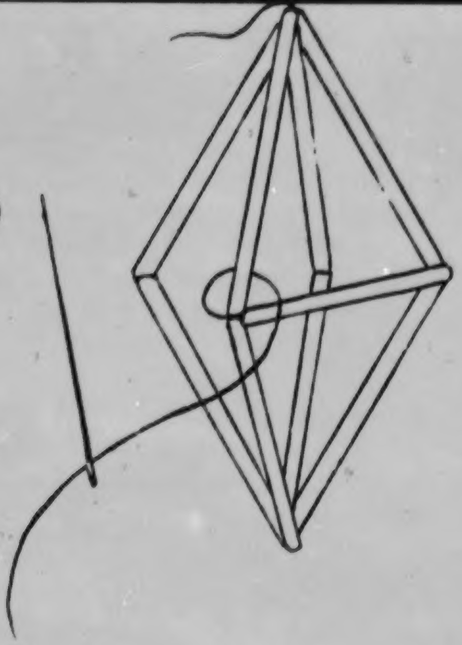
Step 3
Add two 4" straws to string and wrap around the angle at the bottom. Pull string tight.



Step 4
Add remaining two 4" straws and wrap string around angle at the top. This completes four sides of basic ornament.

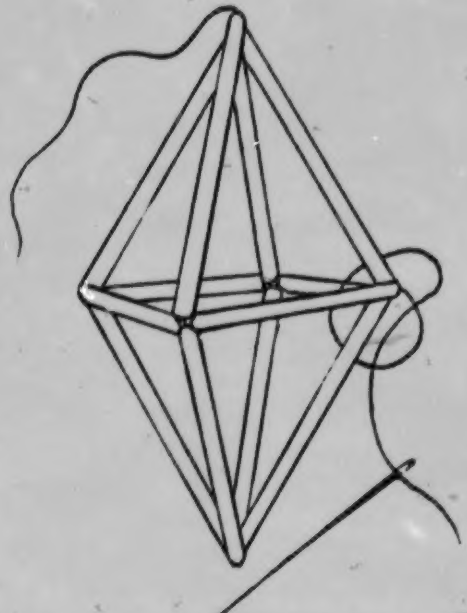


Step 5
Push needle through any of the nearest straws to reach a side angle.



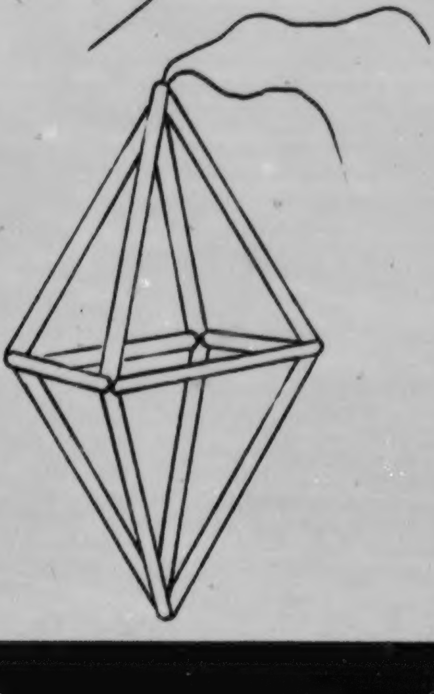
Step 6

Place one 3" straw on string and hook to next angle by winding string once around.



Step 7

Repeat step 6 using remaining 3" straws one at a time until you have the four sides completed. Tie knot at a side angle.



Step 8

Put needle through nearest 4" straw upwards to strating point and tie securely. Before cutting excess string leave enough so that ornament can be fastened to the tree.

Related topics:

Pre-Christian celebrations
Symbolism

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: LITHUANIAN FOLK CELEBRATION

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. identify the date of the Joninės celebration;
2. describe the kinds of activities which usually form a part of this holiday;
3. present an argument for or against the statement: "Joninės should be a national holiday, like July 4th and Labor Day, in which everyone (newspaper reporters, firemen, policemen, bakers, airplane pilots, baseball players, telephone operators, etc.) has the night off in order to celebrate the arrival of summer."

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

When a person, a family or a group of people move from one place to another they carry more things with them than are listed by the moving company or inspected by customs officials. Their race, language, and ethnicity are in most cases as obvious as their personal property. Perhaps less obvious, and perhaps more significant, are their values, traditions, ceremonies, and celebrations. European immigrants to the southern hemisphere have carried the Christmas tree and the yuletide fire even though Christmas there occurs in the summer. Similarly, ethnic groups have brought to the free society of the United States traditions and ceremonies which have endured hundreds, even thousands of years of persecution in the old country. These traditions and ceremonies are continued in a different physical and political environment for varied reasons. They help to define the group as a people—to provide an answer to the question: "Who are we?" "Who am I?" They provide some meaning in a generally chaotic world. They hold people together, providing security and a sense of belonging. They say: "This is where we have been. This is what we have done. This is what we value."

Bridge questions

1. Give one example of a holiday or tradition which has been brought to America by immigrants.
2. What obstacles do immigrants face when they attempt to transplant a holiday over a distance of thousands of miles and establish it in an alien land?
3. Choose one American holiday as an example. Describe how it is usually celebrated—the essential part and meaning of the holiday. How would you go about transplanting the essence?

JONINĖS

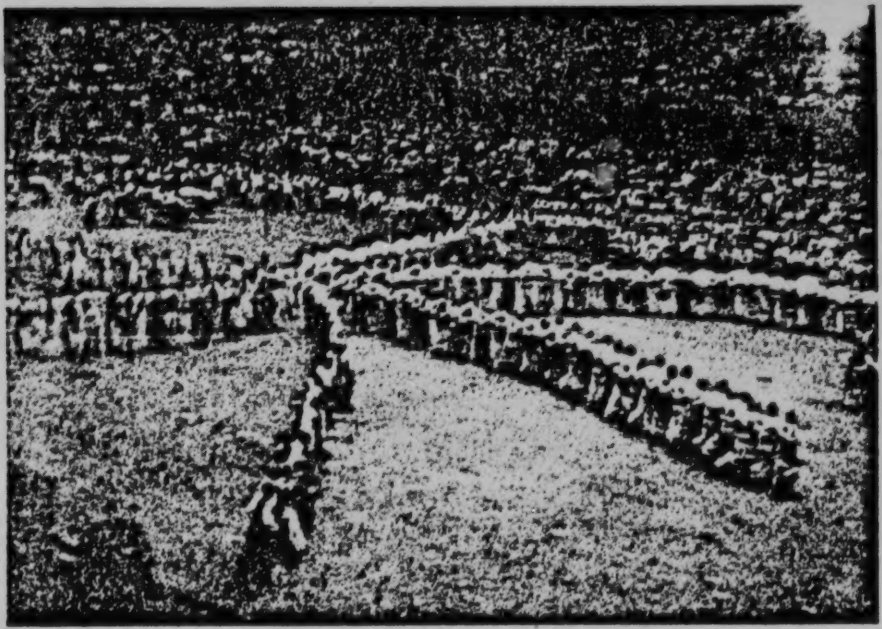
In Lithuania Joninės (Yó-knee-ness) is celebrated on June 24th. It is the feast in honor of St. John as well as Midsummer's Night—the longest day of the year. Hardly anyone, young or old, gets much sleep on "Joninės." Bonfires are built wherever they can best be seen, preferably on all available hills. Everyone tries to stay up all night singing and dancing. Those who are young challenge each other to leap across the brilliantly blazing bonfires. This mid-night celebration commemorates the advent of summer.

Many years ago, people believed that on "Joninės" night the wood fern burst into bloom and whoever found this unusual bloom became all-knowing and all-seeing. This lucky person could then speak with the birds and animals and perhaps even find a fortune in gold. Finding the fern blossom was never easy. All sorts of evil spirits and devils would try to frighten the searchers because they were jealous of anyone else's good fortune. The only way a searcher could rid himself of the evil spirits was by carrying and swinging a branch of the mountain ash.

"Joninės" night is a night filled with magic and flying witches who converge on a hilltop to plan ways in which to bring harm to human beings. If anyone picks healing herbs and medicinal grasses, they should do so before "Joninės" because on that night the witches can remove the healing power of the herbs.

"Joninės" is a day and night of merrymaking, when men and women who bear the name of John or its derivative also celebrate their name's day. In Lithuania the name's day was celebrated instead of the birthday with gift giving and partying as is done in this country.

This ancient holiday continues to be celebrated by Lithuanian Americans in Chicago. The flowering wood fern is still difficult to find, but picnics, bonfires, and dances are plentiful. Evil spirits are still believed, by some, to lurk in the dark recesses of the Forest Preserve.



Lithuanian Dance Festival in Chicago

Activities

Ask students to name any holiday that has originated in America and what these holidays celebrate or what is the meaning of these holidays (e.g. Lincoln's birthday, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving). If they were Americans living abroad, would they continue to celebrate these American holidays, even though the holidays have no meaning to other people in the country? For instance, would you, as an American living in London, try to have a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving? Would it do any harm to the English people? Would the meaning of the holiday be different if you had the celebration in a country where you did not hear your language spoken—for example, in Spain, Italy, or Greece?

Evaluation

The student should be able to answer the following questions:

1. Why do you think the Lithuanians have attempted to preserve this holiday in America?
2. What particular obstacles or difficulties are involved in maintaining a rural, agricultural celebration in the midst of an urban, industrial environment?

Related topics: **Ethnic group:** Lithuanians

Lent **Theme:** Contributions

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe how Lithuanians celebrate Easter.

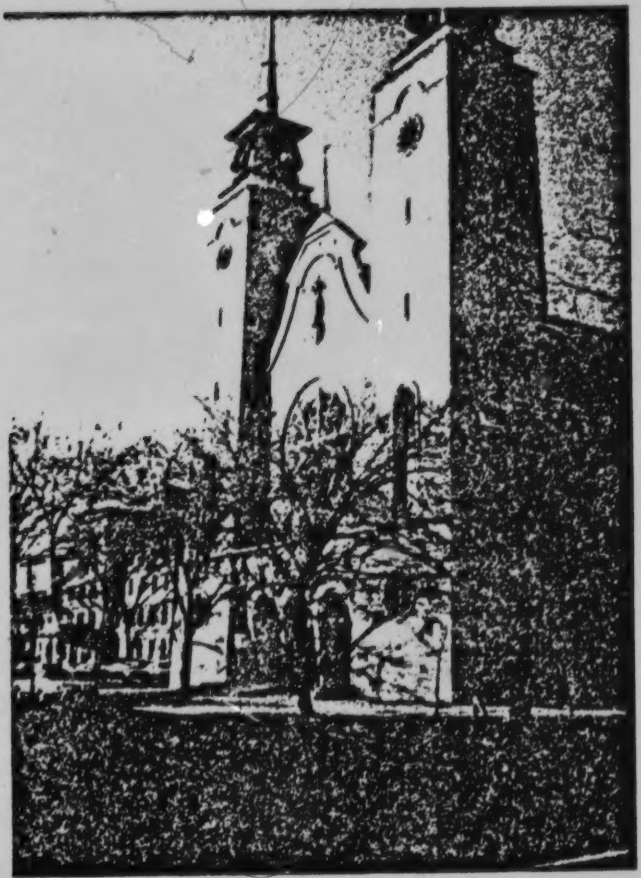
LITHUANIAN EASTER

Easter is one of the most joyful feasts in Lithuania. It reminds us of the resurrection of Christ and the coming of Spring. Easter is preceded by Lent when strict fasting rules are observed and festivities of any kind are forbidden.

During the week before Easter Sunday the houses are scrubbed and cleaned. Different kinds of foods, such as meats, cakes and cookies, are baked in preparation of the Easter festivities. During Holy Week many attend various church services. On Holy Saturday one member of the family goes to church to bet Holy Water and Blessed Fire. Homes are sprinkled with the Holy Water as a protection against thunder, lightning and other natural disasters. The Blessed Fire is used to light the hearth for the preparation of the ritual Easter meal. The happiest time occurs in the evening when everyone tries to outdo each other in decorating Easter eggs. The eggs are decorated with a pin dipped in hot melted wax and then the egg is placed into dye. Another way to decorate eggs is to dye them first and then etch them with the tip of a sharp knife.

Easter Sunday begins with an early morning mass, usually at sunrise, which includes a procession around the church and singing of joyous hymns. After the Mass bread and Easter eggs are blessed.

The second day of Easter, which is also a holiday, is set aside for visiting with friends and relatives and for such affairs as games and folk dancing.



Lithuanian BVM Nativity Church
in Chicago

BUILDING A NEW NATION

LITHUANIAN MASS IMMIGRATION
INTEGRATION INTO AMERICAN LIFE

Related topics:

Mass immigration, 19th century
Russian Revolution, 1917
Patterns of adjustment and assimilation

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: LITHUANIAN IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. define the word, "status";
2. describe briefly the different reasons or motives for the pre-1914 and post-1945 migration from Lithuania to the United States;
3. state the number of people involved in these two separate migrations.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

About forty million Europeans, Asians, Africans and Latin Americans have entered the United States in the past two hundred years. They came in different proportions and at different times. Before 1950 more than six million came from Germany, about three and a half million from Russia, less than half a million from China. The peak year of immigration from Ireland was in 1851; from Sweden, 1882; from Italy, 1907.* Among all groups (with the important exception of slaves brought from Africa) the reasons for coming have tended to be similar: The quest for greater religious freedom; the desire to avoid persecution because of their political beliefs; the search for highly paid work and an improvement in their material standard of living.

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*Source: Oscar Handlin, Immigration as a Factor in American History. New York. Prentice Hall, 1959, p. 16. The same statistics appear in U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945.

The peak years of immigration for Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Greeks and Jews were in the period between 1880-1924. While large numbers also came to the United States following World War II and the subsequent civil war and political terrorism throughout eastern Europe, most of those in the U.S. today who are members of the above groups owe their origins to the migration of their grandparents and great-grandparents before World War I.

Most of those who came were peasants. They lived in an agricultural society which had changed little in a thousand years. They were not ignorant or stupid—terms suggested by our modern use of the word "peasant." They were illiterate; the government was not theirs nor was it interested in their material well-being. Generally, they were poor. Family "farms" were five to ten acres at best. They knew little of the world beyond the limits of their village. Into this isolated society came news about life in the United States.

The mines, factories and railroads of a newly industrialized nation cried out for additional laborers. The railroads had been given land by the government; now they needed to sell the land to settlers who would create new farms, harvest new crops and produce grain and livestock for the trains to carry. The railroads sent agents to Ireland, Sweden, Italy, and Poland seeking those willing to begin a new life in a distant land. Many listened; some decided to take the risk.

Men with strong backs and young families heard the same message in the coal and iron mines of Cornwall, Wales, Italy, Sweden and eastern Europe. They heard with disbelief stories about high wages in America. Workers in America were said to have meat every day, not just once a week. Butter and milk and bread were cheap and good. Sometimes these tales were just that--"deceptive advertising" we would call it today. One worker from the copper mines of northern Italy in the late 1890's migrated to the copper mines of northern Michigan. In Italy, he had worked a 48 hour week; in this new world he worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week--if he wanted to work. There were always newcomers getting off the next boat who were hungry to take his place.

Within the space of three generations the nation was transformed from a small, independent agricultural and commercial society into a powerful nation with a self assurance and pride that would have astonished the framers of the Declaration of Independence. The transformation had been made possible by the fearless labor of uncounted men, women and children. They worked in a society where the dignity of labor was sometimes the only reward.

Bridge questions

1. Most of the Jews, Greeks, Ukrainians, and Lithuanians who now live in the United States came here in what years?
2. What are the three major causes for migration to the United States?
3. What specific political rights and religious liberties does the Constitution provide for all individuals and groups in the United States, whether or not they are citizens of the country?

LITHUANIAN IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

Immigration by Lithuanians to the United States took place in two general periods. The first period includes the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, before 1914. Between the World Wars, 1918-1939, comparatively few Lithuanians settled in the United States. During the second period of immigration, in the late 1940's and early 1950's, the number of immigrants was much smaller than during the first period. It is estimated that over 30,000 Lithuanians reached the United States after World War II; whereas, before World War I, the number of Lithuanian immigrants was approximately 500,000.

The two groups of immigrants differed considerably. The pre-1914 immigrants in general were poor, unmarried, young men and women. Most of them had been farm laborers. They came to America seeking better economic opportunities. Others who were part of this pre-1914 migration wished to escape from oppression by the Russian government. Still others fled to avoid long years of service in the Russian army.

Although most of the Lithuanians came from rural areas, only a small percentage of them took up farming here in the United States. Most settled initially in the East, especially in the coal-mining towns of eastern Pennsylvania and West Virginia, where it is estimated that 75 to 80 thousand lived in 1904. From there Lithuanians moved to the industrial cities of the Midwest where they took jobs in iron foundries, cotton and silk mills, shoe factories, sugar refineries, stockyards, packing houses, at the docks and on railroads. A vivid account of the life of Lithuanian stockyard workers in Chicago is described in Upton Sinclair's novel, The Jungle.

The social and religious life for this group was organized around parishes, of which over 100 existed by the year 1918. In addition, over 400 organizations existed within the community, variously serving to maintain Lithuanian cultural ties, combat anti-immigration prejudice and generally work to improve the ghetto-like conditions that characterized the immigrants' lifestyle during the early years: wretched housing, poor quality food and inadequate health care and social services.

The second group of immigrants was composed of refugees who fled from the tyranny of Soviet Russia. Earlier, the Russian Revolution of 1917 had overthrown the czarist government and had given more freedom to the Russian people. But the new communist or soviet government did not change the old Russian attitude toward the Lithuanians. In 1944 the Russian army swept across Lithuania and ended its independence.

The refugees who fled, first to Germany and then to the United States, came from a different social class than the earlier immigrants. Many of these post-1945 immigrants were well-educated professional persons such as lawyers, engineers, doctors, architects and university teachrs. Very few peasants or farm laborers left.

Once the refugees arrived in the United States, whatever their previous occupation, all had to start anew. Almost all had to take any jobs they were able to find, usually that of unskilled laborers. Those who had done this kind of work all their lives, resumed their previous occupation. Their position was similar to that of those who came before 1914. The status of the professionals declined, and so did their income. Some were eventually able to resume either their former occupations or obtain similar work. The majority, particularly the older generation, were usually not so fortunate.

The loss of social and economic status for many of these refugees was softened by several factors. With memories of the years spent in Displaced Persons' camps in Germany, most felt that any work in a free society was preferable to the dreary life in the camps or in Russian-occupied Lithuania. Because of the high pay received by many American laborers, the decline of status was felt less strongly. The large number of Lithuanians already living in the American cities helped facilitate the adjustment to the new circumstances. Many groups set up their own organizations which united fellow members of their original profession. A person's status within the refugee group depended mostly on achievements in Lithuania rather than on his occupation in the United States. Also, they were able to provide higher education for the young generation. People transferred their hopes to their children and tried to help them attain what they themselves were unable to achieve.

Today there are over a million people of Lithuanian descent in the United States with Illinois possessing the largest population. According to the 1970 census, 89% of Lithuanian Americans live in cities, the remaining 11% on farms.

Activities

Have the students ask their parents their country of origin and why they or their ancestors emigrated to America. On a world map use colored pins to indicate the place of origin and the varied times of arrival.

For those who were here before 1840	Blue
between 1840 - 1870	Green
1870 - 1924	Yellow
1925 - 1945	Pink
1945 - 1955	Red
1955 - 1976	Brown

Use different shapes to indicate the different reasons for emigration:

A Star - for economic reasons

A Triangle - for religious persecutions

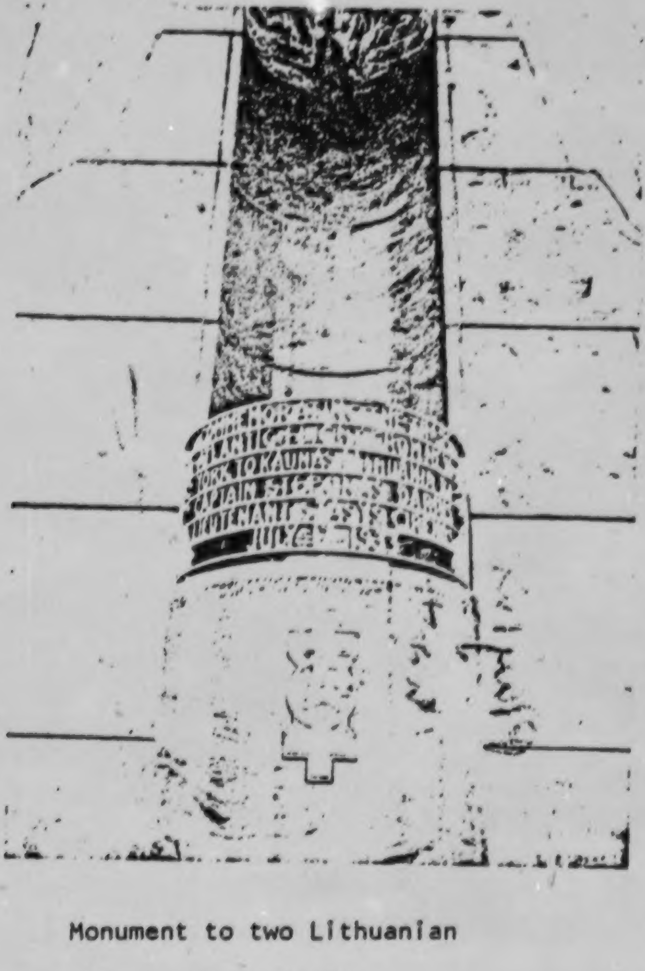
A Square - for political persecutions

Ask the members of the class to explain the reasons for their family's emigration to America. Gradually, the children may begin to trace patterns and see the correlations between the countries, periods of immigration, and the historical causes for those migrations.

Evaluation

1. Some people say that immigrants came to the United States for "better opportunities." Using the Lithuanian experience, 1890-1955 as a case study, write three paragraphs examining the meaning of the phrase. What did the phrase mean for the early, unskilled laborers? For those who were laborers who came after 1945? For those professionals who came after 1945?

2. Write a report based upon your interview with one immigrant. Try to discover how important was the desire for improved status and to what extent that goal was achieved. What were the factors which account for the success? If the goal was not achieved, why not? What other factors were important besides the quest for improved status?



Monument to two Lithuanian

pioneers in aviation -
Darius and Girenas

Related topics:

Unskilled labor

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Contributions

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the kind of work that Lithuanians did at the turn of the century and to identify the regions where they settled.

LITHUANIANS IN THE LABOR FORCE

Without marketable skills or knowledge of English, Lithuanians of the first immigration (1868-1914), had no choice but to work long hours at low pay. Brought up to respect honest work, Lithuanians as laborers earned the reputation of being diligent, honest and dependable, and therefore much in demand by employers.

Many among the first immigrants went to work in the coal mines of eastern Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In 1904 between 75,000 and 80,000 of them lived in those coal-mining areas. In New York, Lithuanians found work in sugar factories, oil refineries and tailor shops. They considered tailoring especially congenial, for they were able to form their own tailoring concerns, which, under contract to larger clothing outlets, sewed together and finished precut material in hundreds of thousands of units. In the first decades of the century, there were forty such Lithuanian tailor shops in Brooklyn and nine in New York. In New Jersey, Lithuanians found work on docks and in brickyards. North of New York, they settled along the entire western shore of the Hudson river up to Albany and Troy, working in electrical machine factories in Schenectady and carpet-weaving shops in Amsterdam. Many of them found work in Connecticut. In Waterbury, Lithuanians were employed from about 1870 in various bronze, iron, lamp and watch factories. In Hartford, where Lithuanians began to settle around 1880, they worked on tobacco farms.

After 1880, a large number of Lithuanians settled in Boston, ready to take jobs in steel mills, sugar, rope, stocking, fertilizer factories and tailor shops. In Brockton, Massachusetts, Lithuanians found work in shoe factories. They also settled in Lawrence, a famous weaving and woolen good manufacturing center. Worcester, with its numerous and varied industries—steel, wire, machines, carpets, paper—has always been very attractive to Lithuanians. The community was begun in 1876, developing eventually into a strong two-parish Lithuanian colony.

In Maryland, of the 400,000 inhabitants of Baltimore at the turn of the century, over 1000 were Lithuanians, working in iron, brass, tobacco and sugar industries. About half, however, crowded the forty-one Lithuanian tailor shops. Another substantial Lithuanian colony was in Cincinnati, a city of stockyards, steel mills and soap factories.

Lithuanians made their trek to the Midwest gradually, reaching Cleveland by 1870, Detroit by 1872, and Grand Rapids by about 1880 where most of them found employment in the city's sawmills. The major settlement for Lithuanians in the Midwest, however, was Chicago, where by 1900 14,000 Lithuanians lived amidst a population of 1,700,000. There they concentrated near the stockyards, where many of them also worked, becoming the subject of Upton Sinclair's famous nove, The Jungle. They also took jobs in various industries—iron and steel, soap, candy, beer and chemicals.

Lithuanians must certainly be counted among those groups of whom it can be said that "their backs were literally the foundation on which American prosperity was built."

The Lithuanian Plaza
W 69TH ST

Marquette Park - Chicago

EXPRESSIONS OF ETHNIC IDENTITY: LITHUANIAN FOLK CULTURE

Related topics:

Song festivals
Opera
Folk dances and games

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: LITHUANIAN CULTURAL CONTINUITIES

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the cultural activities the Lithuanian community promotes in America.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

A people carry with them into a new country needs and wants which escape the careful eye of immigration officials. These longings and aspirations are not economic. They do not represent a massive "I want" chorus. Rather, there seems to exist within society a need for community, for purpose and meaning, for beauty and order. These collective needs are frequently expressed and satisfied by the work of individual artists—poets, painters, musicians. The artist may not consciously ask, "Ah, now today what shall I create on behalf of my people?" But the work that the artist creates represents not only the way he or she sees reality, but also the way their people view the world. If it were otherwise the artist and the people would not be able to communicate with each other, and one would not be able to act as spokesman for the larger group.

In the early days of human society folk art was a direct representation of these collective needs and fears. The cave drawings at Lascaux, France, for example, painted about 15-20,000 years ago, are believed to be the work of a group of artist-priests acting on behalf of the common good. The "art" is an expression of the people's desire to propitiate forces they did not understand and to seek their aid in obtaining food. Other examples of folk art--dance, song, theatre, weaving, embroidery, sculpture--originally served similar social purposes--to express joy or thanks, to share grief, to record an important event.

As time passed these distinctive, unique acts became ritualized. The memory of the original, religious event receded, but often the words and actions associated with the original event were continued. The rituals endured because they combined grace and mystery, they were beautiful to watch or pleasing to hear. They were emotionally and aesthetically satisfying to the members of the group.

In the United States today these old folk expressions have taken on a new meaning. The original event which they celebrate and the reasons for the ritual performance may have been forgotten, but the tradition itself is regarded as a vital symbol of the group's identity. Commercial entertainment and the work of professional artists may both be more sophisticated. Television and mass education have broken down many of the old barriers between groups. All the more reason then to retain the old way of doing things as guideposts to help us know who we are.

Bridge questions

1. Can you give some examples of folk art in the United States today?
2. If folk art, in the traditional sense, seems in such short supply, can you give some explanations for this shortage?

3. In what ways could folk art be encouraged—or is it such a natural expression that it cannot be slowed down or speeded up by outside forces?

Lithuanian girls playing a folk musical instrument

LITHUANIAN CULTURAL CONTINUITIES

With the influx of the second immigration of Lithuanians leading to a resurgence of organized activity came a cultural revitalization of the Lithuanian American community as a whole.

One measure of this vitality is in the area of Lithuanian musical activities which include song festivals, operas, and classical music composition and performance.

Song festivals, for example, which are conducted almost exclusively in Lithuanian, are wonderfully colorful events in the cultural life of Lithuanian people. They were revived outside of Lithuania in 1956, taking place in Chicago every five years, with Lithuanian choruses from the United States and Canada participating. Within Lithuania itself, song festivals are a tradition. For example, 2200 choruses were registered in 1966, from which 200 to 300 take part in the song festivals, which since 1946 have been held once every five years in Vilnius.

World premier operas as well as Lithuanian operas are staged yearly in Chicago by the Lithuanian opera guild. The singers and performers are the best Lithuanian artists and the music is provided by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. In Lithuania, the opera season runs from September until the end of May and never lacks an audience. There, Lithuania singers are known not only in the Soviet Union but in Western Europe.

Another measure of cultural continuity and cross-fertilization between Lithuanians in America and Lithuania has been in the area of musical composition and performance, where there have been written since the war, in America and Lithuania, music for thirteen operas, five operettas. In America highly qualified Lithuanian composers, pianists and soloists have made a name not only among Lithuanians, but also world-wide. Such names as Lilija Sukis, Anna Kaskas, Arnoldas Voketaitis, Jonas Vaznelis, and Algirdas Brazis have appeared with the Metropolitan and Lyric Operas, as have the prominent singers Teresa Zylis Gara, Polyna Staska, and Paul Zudas. The young composer Darius Lapinskas (1934-) received excellent reviews from American music critics for his opera "Lokys" (1966), and his cantatas "Maras" and "Karalius Mindaugas" (1967). In sum, the work of Lithuanian composers has come to include all forms and media of music such as instrumental concertos and sonatas, symphonies, string quartets, and other chamber music, and suites.

Another index of Lithuanian cultural activity is in the area of folk dancing which has its roots in pagan religious ritual. A great number of the dances performed today are illustrations or imitations of agricultural scenes. This is a reflection of their common origins as a pastime of peasants. Examples include: Malunas (The Mill) which depicts rhythmical work movements; Rugeliai (Rye); Piuvejai (Mowers); Gyvataras (Hedgerow); Audeja (Woman Weaver); Kubilas (The Tub Dance); Blezdingele (Swallow); Gaidys (Rooster); Dobilelis (Clover); Aguonele (Poppy); and numerous others.

Characteristics of Lithuanian folk dancing are their massiveness and symmetry. Most dances involve an unlimited number of participants who execute the same movements and dance to the same rhythm. The steps are natural, not involving any elaborate foot movements. They are conducive to the rough wooden floors and grassy areas on which the dances are usually performed. The accompanying music is never overwhelming, usually in 2/4, 3/4, or 3/8 time with an even number of bars.

An offshoot of the folk dances are the games called rateliai. Rateliai resemble simple folk dances. Walking in a single, double, or half circle, or rows is characteristic of games. The movements follow the rhythms of the song being sung, and are alternatively slower and quicker, and consist of clapping, turning, bending and passing through. The games are often played at large events such as weddings or picnics, with an unlimited number of participants joining in.

After World War II, Lithuanian refugees popularized folk dancing abroad. Nearly every sizeable Lithuanian community has at least one dance ensemble. Most of the ethnic schools also have their own dancing groups. The folk dance festivals held in Chicago in 1957, 1963, 1968 saw between 1000 and 1500 participants from the United States and Canada. As a cultural experience folk dancing is a tie between participants and the mother land, as well as a contribution to the American cultural scene.

Another area in which Lithuanian immigrants have made an impact has been in literature of which a small but significant amount has been translated into English such as House Upon the Sand by Jurgis Gliauda which deals with life in Nazi Germany, and Footbridges and Abysses by Aloyzas Baronas, who in addition to novels, has written short stories, satirical poems and children's stories. Among the dominant themes dealt with by the Lithuanian expatriate writers, as might be expected, are those dealing with the problems faced by refugees starting life anew in a foreign land and the realities of exile from one's native land.

Suggested activities

1. Ask the students to draw and cut out paper puppets in folk costumes of different countries. Tell the children that you want to put on a play called Ellis Island. Explain to the class that Ellis Island was for a long time a place through which immigrants passed. Select two children to play the role of American immigration officers who have decided if the puppet-immigrants should get a permit to enter the United States. Standard questions which the officers ask are:
   - Why do you want to come to America?
   - What skills do you have and how are you going to earn your living here?
   - What will you do with your costume in America?

   Discuss with the students the reasons for letting or not letting the puppet-immigrants to enter the United States. Also discuss with the students if the folk costumes should be kept or totally discarded by the immigrants. If the costumes were to be discarded, what would be the loss? Point out that all folk costumes are beautifully ornamented, harmonious in color composition and adopted to different climates and life styles.
2. You can have a project in teaching the students how to make a folk art object, e.g. Christmas straw ornaments, painted Easter eggs, Karagiozi puppets, etc. Instructions on how to make these things are included in the materials under different groups of the project.

Evaluation

1. What type of musical activities do Lithuanian Americans engage in?
2. What are Lithuanian folk dances like? Why are they important to the community?

CULTURAL PATTERNS:
EUROPE AND SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

INDIVIDUALS OF EUROPEAN ORIGINS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO AMERICAN LIFE:

OUTSTANDING AMERICAN LITHUANIANS

Related topics:

Athletes
Actors
Photographers
Politicians

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: 20TH CENTURY LITHUANIAN AMERICANS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. name at least three outstanding individuals of Lithuanian origin who significantly contributed to American life.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

Shakespeare compared the different stages in the life of an individual to the career of an actor who played many different parts in a lifetime. But we also know that even in one day the individual has many parts to play. The individuals in your class assume the role of student, but they are also brother or sister, son or daughter, nephew or niece, friend or stranger. Some of their roles are also played by their teacher who may have additional roles--cook, dressmaker, union member, lover, graduate student or home-owner. Sometimes the roles are in conflict; the mature individual knows which roles are most important and is able to adjust the conflicting demands.

Immigrants and their descendants, like Shakespeare's actors, have performed varied roles in American society. Often the newcomers suffered from the stigma frequently attached to newcomers. As they made the transition from Old World to New World, they were forced to make choices.

Some retained all their former ways and made no changes. Some did just the opposite—denied their ethnic heritage and completely accepted the American way. Still others successfully combined both the traditional and American culture. They became effective, participating members of two communities—one a creation of the New World, the other a product of the Old World traditions and loyalties.

Bridge questions

1. Can you list the reasons why someone would not want to change their traditional ways of doing things—their religion, language, and values?
2. List the reasons why someone might wish to do the opposite—abandon all of their old ways of doing things.
3. How difficult or easy would it be to attempt to combine both the old and the new? What advantages might there be in such a combination? What disadvantages?

20TH CENTURY LITHUANIAN AMERICANS

For many Lithuanians, the celebration of their accomplishments is often a community affair. Occasionally however, noteworthy contributions transcend the community boundary to also benefit the larger society, expecially in those areas such as sports and entertainment with which the wider public also identifies and derives a measure of pride, satisfaction, and enjoyment.

Among those who have achieved wider recognition are, in the area of sports, Jack Sharkey (Jouzas Žukauskas) who was world heavyweight boxing champion in 1932, and Albina Osipavitch (Osipavičius) who won the 100 meter gold medal in the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam, the high point of a swimming career that included sixty-five medals and twelve trophies.

Most widely known among contemporary athletes are Johnny Unitas (Jonaitis) and Dick Butkus who recently ended distinguished careers as professional football players. A present world-class tennis player is Vitus Gerulaitis, who in 1974, won the important Grand Prix tournament in Vienna, and came in second in the United States Professional Indoor Singles tournament in Philadelphia in January 1975.

Prominent film actors who have achieved international reknown are Charles Bronson, Lawrence Harvey and Ruta Lee.

Less publically recognized but equally notable is the achievement of the photographer-artist Vytas Valaitis (1931-1965) who in 1959 was awarded the highest international prize by U.S. Camera magazine and who photographed such distinguished people as the musician Pablo Casals and the royal families of Denmark and Sweden.

Lithuanians have also been active in both Democratic and Republican parties. Among Lithuanian Americans who have contributed to Chicago civic life are Attorney Anthony A. Olis, President of the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Chicago; Alfonse Wells, head of Traffic Division of the Municipal Court; John Zuris, judge of Municipal Court; and Walter Baltis, a trustee of the Sanitary District.

Also deserving recognition is Martin Radtke (1883-1973), an immigrant of peasant origin, who, without formal education, made a small fortune in the stock market solely from knowledge acquired from the Economics Division of the New York Public Library where he spent practically all his waking hours reading. Indepted to the Library for the opportunity to educate himself, as the inscription from his will states, Mr. Radtke left his estate of $368,000 to the Library, "with the wish that it be used so that others can have the same opportunity made available to me." In a dedication ceremony on October 1, 1974, City and Library officials unveiled a marble plaque set in the floor of the Fifth Avenue entrance of the Library's central building in memory of the Lithuanian immigrant-turned-benefactor.

Suggested activities

Ask the children to name different professions, occupations, or arts that have been important in American society. They can write them in their notebooks or you can put their suggestions on the blackboard in one column. Ask the children if they know any outstanding individuals that they can identify with the categories in the first column.

Evaluation

1. Name at least one outstanding American sportsman or woman of Lithuanian origin.
2. Relate the story of Martin Radtke.

Related topics: Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Private enterprise Theme: Contributions

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe how Lithuanians are employed in American economic enterprises.

LITHUANIANS IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

From the ownership of a few tailor shops and taverns at the turn of the century, Lithuanian immigrants and their children gradually advanced to more challenging economic enterprises, investing their small capital and great energy into the manufacture of furniture, carpets, medical equipment and chemical supplies, and other small industries. From 1902 to 1969, there was the Seporaitis soft drink manufacturing and distributing company in Pittston. Until it was closed by the Depression, the People's Furniture Company was a successful Chicago store for nineteen years. The Rudis Rockwell Engineering Company has been in Chicago since 1942, and since 1923, also in Chicago, the Kuraitis automobile sales company. The Neris Construction Company of Juozas Augustas has been in operation in Cleveland since about 1955, and the Michigan Farm Cheese Dairy of J. and A. Andrulis, whose products are widely distributed throughout the United States, was established in 1942.

Walking down the streets of West Broadway in South Boston or South Halsted in Chicago, one can pass almost an unbroken line of Lithuanian physicians' and lawyers' offices, real estate firms, life insurance agencies, pharmacies, florist shops, travel bureaus, restaurants, printing shops, and other establishments dealing in a variety of goods and services.

Lithuanians have not just prospered locally, but at the national and international level as well. In New York, the Neris International Trading Company, operated by Drs. Kazickas and Valiunas, prominent patrons of Lithuanian cultural and political affairs, deals with exports and imports, and also in the financing and licensing of American industrial enterprises abroad. Also in New York, is the Litas Investing Company, Inc., begun by V. Vebeluinas in 1965, which incorporated a real estate brokerage firm, insurance agency and a travel service, and is still expanding. Several banks that were either started or remain operated by Lithuanians have proven quite successful, such as the Keistucio Loan and Building Assn. No. 1 in Chicago which began in 1897 with an initial capital of $14,000, and which in 1972 under the name of Union Federal Savings and Loan Assn. of Chicago had accumulated resources of $42,870,000. The Simanas Daukantas Building and Loan Association, also in Chicago, was established in 1905; by 1972, under its new name of Mutual Federal Savings and Loan Association it had a capital of $27,762,000. Perhaps an even more remarkable growth was established by the Midland Savings and Loan Association which was established in 1914, opening for business with only $65 in the treasury and for a time transacting its affairs in a tavern; by 1972 it had financial assets of $10,900,000. Another amazing success story is that of the Standard Federal Savings and Loan Association of Chicago, which was called Gediminas from the date of its founding in 1909 till its reorganization in 1933, and which started out with nine charter members pooling a total of $115 and pledging weekly deposits of $25. By 1972 it had a capital base of $172,350,000 making it the largest Lithuanian financial institution in America. While the bulk of Lithuanian financial strength lay in Chicago, similar initiative and success appeared in other cities, such as the Liberty Federal Savings and Loan Association of Philadelphia, or the Superior Savings and Loan Association of Cleveland.

All of these financial institutions, because of Lithuanian initiative, investment, and management, have yielded long-term benefits to the Lithuanian community and to the prosperity as a whole.

HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF LITHUANIAN AMERICANS

Related topics:

Lithuanian Polish Commonwealth
World War I
Congress of Captive Nations
Russification
Russian Revolution, 1917

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: LITHUANIAN HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. define "russification";
2. give the meaning of "U.S.S.R.";
3. locate Lithuania upon a map of Europe;
4. explain why its location between Germany and Russia is a factor in its struggle to achieve or maintain political independence.

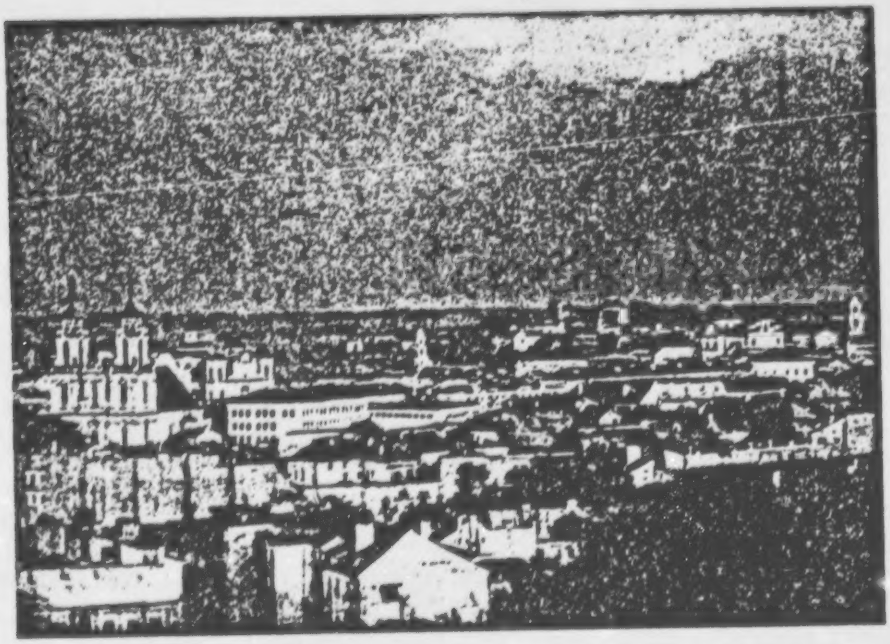
How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

If you travelled about the world and asked different people the meaning of their group's name, there would be a surprising degree of similarity. The Eskimo, the Cheyenne, the Sioux, the Bantu—in every case the word the people use to describe themselves means "the people" or "the first people." Of course they are aware of the fact that many other people inhabit the earth, but they tend to believe that there is something special or different about themselves. They are aware of their own, separate identity as a people, speaking the same language, sharing the same traditions and values. They are different from others. Sometimes this difference is a source of pride, sometimes a cause for grief: an old Sioux holy man once described the great numbers of white people who came into his territory as "more numerous than the leaves upon the trees." But the number of people in each group was less important than the fact that they represented two different traditions, with very different values. This "sense of the past" is sometimes described as an "historical consciousness."

Like the simpler concept of "roots" an historical consciousness provides a people with a sense of their collective past. Usually they regard their origins as being particularly blessed or favored by God or the Fates. They have engaged in titanic struggles with mighty foes and have triumphed. Sometimes their numbers have increased; sometimes their numbers have remained small. To keep their society intact institutions have been established which carefully set down proper rules of conduct for the individual, the family, the clan, the tribe, and the nation as a whole.

Historical consciousness is not limited to families and tribes. The great nation-states of western Europe have even more developed a myth of their uniqueness, and greatness, as a people. This national self-awareness has acted as a spur to immense worldly accomplishments—piling up military victories, material wealth and cultural splendor. While many vital differences in values and traditions exist among them, 16th century Spain and Holland, 17th and 18th century France and England, and 19th century Germany have all exhibited the national belief that destiny was being worked out through the agency of their particular group. In this sense an historical consciousness combined a perception of the past with a blueprint for the future: people who knew where they had been also knew where they were going.

In modern times this sharp sense of the past is sometimes regarded as quaint, or as an anachronism--something no longer fit or appropriate to this age of personal liberty and ease of access to information or travel. In a mobile society where status rises and falls swiftly within one generation such concepts as historical consciousness do not always seem relevant. But it has proved to be more than a retrospective world view. In the case of some ethnic groups it has held the people together in the face of holocaust and unprecedented persecution. In a time of troubles, as well as in times of joy, knowledge of the past has helped them survive till the morrow.



Vilnius - capital of Lithuania

LITHUANIAN HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Can you locate Lithuania on the map? It is in Central Europe on the southeastern shore of the Baltic Sea. The land has been settled since prehistoric times. In the late medieval ages, Lithuania was one of the major European powers, especially during the rule of Vytautas the Great (1392-1430). Then came a period of almost two centuries of close collaboration between Lithuania and neighboring Poland which climaxed in the establishment of the Lithuanian Polish Commonwealth in 1569. Such an alliance helped to withstand for a time the threat of a growing power, Russia. However, Russia made alliances with Austria and the German state of Prussia, thus surrounding Lithuanian and Polish territories, and finally defeating the Lithuanian Polish Commonwealth (1795). The lands were partitioned by the victors in such a way that the greater portion of Lithuania became annexed to Czarist Russia.

From 1864 to 1904 there existed a policy of "russification" which enforced the Russian language and outlawed Lithuanian newspapers and books. At the same time the Czar sought to extend the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church, which he controlled, by persecuting the Roman Catholic religion in Lithuania.

In 1905 some reforms were made in the Russian government. They granted the Lithuanians permission to publish Lithuanian newspapers and to teach the Lithuanian language in schools.

During the early part of World War I the Germans drove the Russian army out of Lithuania. In June 1916, a congress of captive nations met in Lausanne, Switzerland and the Lithuanians made their first public demand for independence. The Germans refused to grant Lithuanians their independence. When the Russian Revolution in November, 1917 caused a civil war in Russia and diverted their attention, the Lithuanians seized the opportunity and in their capital at Vilnius declared independence, February 16, 1918. For the first time in more than a century, Lithuania was free. Eventually a government was formed and Antanas Smetona was elected first president of a democratic republic.

When World War II broke out in 1939 Lithuania tried to remain neutral. The effort was in vain. In August, 1940 Lithuania was forcefully incorporated into the U.S.S.R. - The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The war caused enormous loss of life in Lithuania. The Soviet government deported tens of thousands to labor camps in Siberia; the victims represented all social classes--teachers, union leaders, priests, small farmers, merchants. When the Germans occupied the country between 1941-1944, they slaughtered thousands of Lithuanian Jews.

As the war drew to a close, Soviet troops once again approached Lithuania. All those who survived the previous horrors of Russian occupation, and who were able to flee, moved west with the retreating German armies. Today Lithuanian Americans are dedicated to the liberation of their homeland. They dream to see in Lithuania the kind of freedom and democratic rule that they experience here in America.

Suggested activities

Ask the students to write a family history covering three generations—their grandparents, parents and themselves. They should note where their family has lived, what language they spoke at home, what schools they went to, what kind of jobs they held, etc. Then ask them how this knowledge of their family's history affects their ideas about themselves. Do they desire to continue or abandon the life-styles of their ancestors? How does this knowledge of the family's past affect their plans for the future.

Evaluation

List the key events in the 20th century which have affected Lithuania's status as a nation, sometimes independent, sometimes captive.

CONFLICTING INTERESTS WITHIN THE NATION

CULTURAL DIVERSITY: LITHUANIAN COMMUNITY IN AMERICA

Related topics:

"Lithuanian World Community"
"Lithuanian American Council"
"Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania"

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Contributions

TOPIC: LITHUANIAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. name at least three Lithuanian organizations which had their origins in the Old World;
2. name at least three categories of Lithuanian American organizations—professional, educational, women's, political, etc.;
3. discuss the importance of voluntary organizations to community life.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

More than three hundred years ago the English poet and preacher John Donne wrote, "No man is an island, entire of itself." Every man, Donne said, was a part of the continent, and if any part of it was washed away, he was diminished. At a time when tolerance was not a virtue, Donne recognized what astronauts and cosmonauts have been telling us since 1957: we live in one earthly community. We need one another.

But to live in community means to be dependent on others and have others depend on us. That is, we must be understanding of the needs of others and therefore act in a responsible way. If we value living in the society of other human beings, it is, first of all, because such an arrangement satisfies our human needs and provides us with an opportunity to express ourselves as human beings. We want to live in a society where we have freedom to be ourselves, freedom to choose our goals in life, and freedom to pursue those goals.

Different ethnic groups have slowly realized that one, effective method to preserve their newly won freedoms was through organized, community action.

COSTUME CONTEST
LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NIGHT

American born Lithuanians in Chicago

LITHUANIAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Prior to reaching their land of final settlement, Lithuanians of the second immigration spent four and five years of difficult existence in German and Austrian refugee camps. There they brought with them all of their old loyalties, ideas and ideals, creating facsimiles of the schools, publications, theater, choirs, art exhibits and societies that they enjoyed in free Lithuania.

Revived in refugee camps, these groups eventually invigorated the organizational life of the older established Lithuanian communities with whose members they made contact as refugees and among whom they later settled. For example, the Catholic students and intellectuals organization Ateitis, dating from 1910, was revived in Germany and was soon thereafter flourishing in the United States.

Also established in Germany in 1949 was the World Association of Lithuanian Engineers and Architects, the Chicago chapter established in 1951. The Lithuanian American Medical Association, founded in Chicago in 1912, was greatly augmented by the arrival of the new immigrants, such that in 1957 it was able to hold its first United States and Canadian physician's convention.

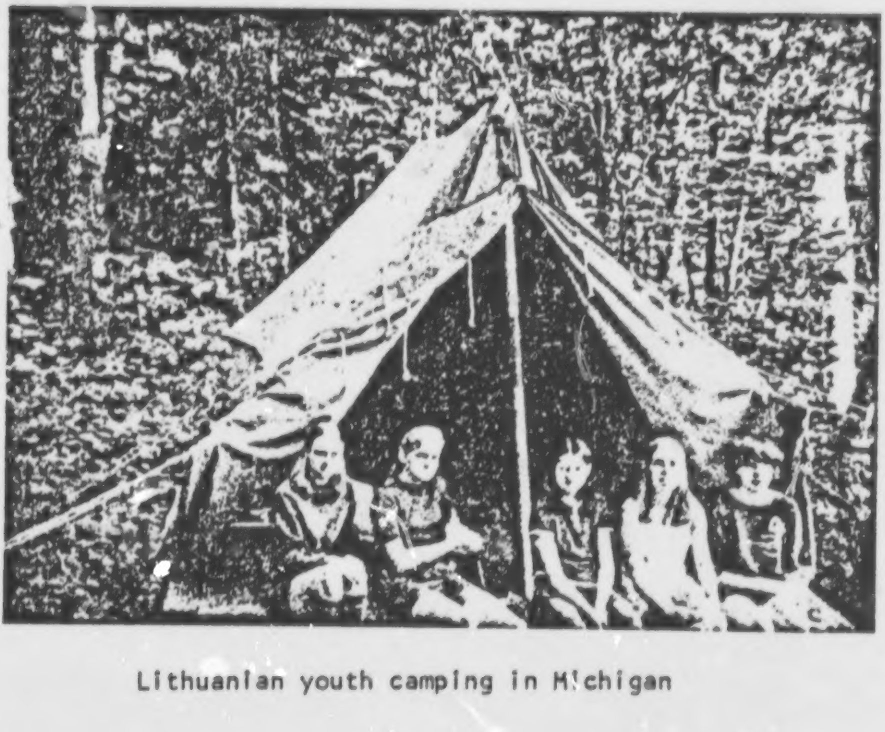
The Lithuanian Women's Council was initiated in Germany in 1947, two years later moving its headquarters to New York. The Union of Lithuanian Catholic Women's Organization, founded by Mrs. Magdalena Galdikas in Lithuania in 1922 and ultimately joined with the World Union of Catholic Womens' Organizations (WUCWO) in 1930, was reestablished in Germany in 1946 after being liquidated by the Soviet occupants, and moved to Paris in 1951, there renaming itself the World Union of Lithuanian Catholic Women's Organizations, and ultimately transferred to New York in 1953. Active also were the Scouts, who are now incorporated in the state of Illinois as the Lithuanian Scouts Association.

Prominent among those organizations transplanted from the refugee camps of Germany is the organization Lithuanian Community (later Lithuanian World Community) which placed prime emphasis on culture and character and whose goals were to advance Lithuanian social, cultural and educational affairs, foster national solidarity, demonstrate faith in the democratic process and the traditional Lithuanian respect for honest toil in whatever foreign places fate would ultimately take them. It was this idea of a community that this later immigration of refugees brought with them to the United States.

When Russians occupied Lithuania in 1940, Lithuanian Americans established a general relief fund. Russians attempted to stop the actions of the fund organizers but to no avail. The headquarters were stationed in New York and in 1947 began collecting clothing and food for their fellow countrymen overseas. The United Lithuanian Relief Fund (BALF) urged the passage of the Displaced Persons Act in 1948 to authorize the first admission of Lithuanian refugees to the United States. Since then, many dollars have been collected to aid brother Lithuanians in any country.

The Lithuanian American Council (ALT) is a central organization that encompasses all the patriotic American Lithuanian organizations in the United States and encourages American Lithuanian support to fight for Lithuania's freedom and independence. Headquarters are in Chicago, It was organized in Lithuania after Soviet occupation and presently its officers are in constant contact with United States government officials. The World organization--Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK) is based in New York.

The Lithuanian Scout Association was started in Lithuania in 1918 by Petras Jurgela. They reactivated when many Lithuanians came to the United States around 1949. The Scouts consist of many branches such as sea scouts, girl scouts, boy scouts, senior scouts, college student scouts, etc. Activities center around camping, hiking and meetings. Summer camps are held in many places in the United States. The Association sponsors publication of books, magazines and brochures. The Lithuanian youth is the most involved in the Scouts which promotes appreciation of Lithuanian culture in the United States.



Lithuanian youth camping in Michigan

Suggested activities

Ask the children to look in the telephone book for the address of the organizations mentioned in the content outline. Children, divided into small groups corresponding to the number of organizations they have located, could compose letters asking if those organization still feel there is prejudice against their ethnic group in American society today, and if so, in what ways is it expressed. What are the other key issues? How does each group seek to resolve the conflicts they encounter? What kinds of coalitions have they formed with other ethnic organizations to achieve common goals?

Evaluation

1. Name one popular Lithuanian youth organization.
2. What does the United Lithuanian Relief Fund do?
3. What is the name of the central Lithuanian organization in the United States?

ISSUES IN ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

THE MEANING OF LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Related topics:

U.S.S.R.
Human rights in Lithuania

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the significance of celebrating Lithuania's Independence Day to Lithuanians in America.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

Ask the students what they think about the meaning of the 4th of July celebrations. Are they important or trivial? Is their own birthday celebration important or not? How is a nation's birthday different? Does the celebration of our nation's birth help us to remember a vital event—the beginning of our independence and a new social order in our country? How would we demonstrate our faith and belief in the political principles on which the American social order is based if we did not celebrate annually the 4th of July? Surely, we would know that back in 1776 America declared its independence from British rule, but is it not possible that for some people the meaning of that event would be obscured because they would never find time to pause and think about it? Having a national holiday makes us all pause and remind ourselves that the freedom we have in America today was not always ours.

There are many Americans who, besides pausing to celebrate freedom on July 4th, also pause on other days: these are the days that independence or the Day of Freedom is celebrated in the country of their ancestors. There is a double purpose in celebrating the independence day of one's ancestral homeland. The individual becomes aware of the universal values which unite that American person with the brotherhood of mankind. It provides an opportunity to stop and celebrate the fact that your roots in that distant country have added an extra dimension to your personal life and have filled to a degree the basic human need of belonging.

Bridge questions

1. Discover what are the dates of independence day celebrations in Mexico, Italy, and Greece.
2. Some nations do not celebrate a day of national independence, but have other holidays of great national importance. For example, find out the meaning of Bastille Day in France. What event does it celebrate? How is the celebration carried out? Do French people living outside of France celebrate the day?
3. Other nations have neither an independence day nor a holiday like it which unites the entire nation in celebration. Ireland and England are two examples. Can you think of others? How do you explain the absence of such a holiday? How much of a difference does it make?

LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Lithuanians in the United States celebrate February 16th as their Independence Day. This particular date is held in high esteem among Lithuanians because presently Lithuania is under the jurisdiction of the U.S.S.R. From 1918 to 1940 Lithuania maintained her independence and established a democratic republic. Many people in high positions emigrated to the United States so to continue the fight for Lithuanian independence. These emigrants were called "Lithuanians in exile" for their goal was to beseech the American government to support their fight.

Every February 16th Lithuanians gather in every colony to celebrate their independence in a memorial service. Government representatives are sent to the Soviet Union to request independence. Traditional independence songs are sung, the national costume is worn and the colors of the independent Lithuanian flag (yellow, green, and red) are portrayed. College students maintain exhibits or pass out flyers in order to publicize this innate feeling for a free homeland. Many organizations together correspond with the American government and the Russian government to protest Lithuanian oppression. With these memorial services Lithuanians have been granted more freedom to visit relatives in the United States and vice versa. There are still certain restrictions placed on Lithuanians such as practicing of religion, American books, international radio communications whereby the choice of the people is still not being recognized. These are some of the concerns that are constantly raised at any Independence Day service. And on every February 16th the hope of freedom for any captive nation is reincarnated.

Suggested activities

Have students find a picture of the Lithuanian flag in a reference book. Have them see if they can discover the meaning of its colors and symbols. Make a comparison between the colors and symbols of the Lithuanian and United States flags.

Evaluation

1. In what period during this century was Lithuania independent?
2. Under whose domination is Lithuania today?
3. What rights are being denied to Lithuanians in Lithuania at the present?

Lithuanian dances

THE CHALLENGE OF AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD

UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS: LITHUANIAN CONCERNS

Related topics:

President Wilson's Fourteen Points
The Lithuanian American Council
The Baltic States
The Paris Peace Conference

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Contributions to American Life

TOPIC: LITHUANIANS FOR A FREE LITHUANIA

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. point out the significance of President Wilson's Fourteen Points;
2. describe the efforts of the Lithuanian American Council in getting the support of the American Congress for a newly independent Lithuania;
3. name the year in which the United States granted recognition of the independence of the Balkan States.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

There is an old proverb, "You cannot keep John on the farm after he has seen Paris." In the same manner you cannot keep people in docile subjugation after they have learned about free societies which provide an individual with equal opportunity regardless of his "race, religion or nationality."

In our day of space exploration, when man has set foot on the moon and pictures flash on our T.V. screens from the distant surface of Mars, it has been very hard to keep secrets from people in hope that remaining unaware of the social progress in other societies their own level of expectations will not rise. Attempts at building fences, which might have worked for medieval China, are no longer successful in the case of present-day Berlin. Man's awareness in the age of electronics cannot be easily fenced in. Today people constantly come into contact with people from other cultures, other ways of living. Therefore, we must learn to accept these cultural differences as a basic and inalienable human right to self-expression. These contacts also bring new awareness of other possibilities of human self-expression and with it new dreams and expectations arise, which, when frustrated, can turn into ugly confrontations. Such confrontations on a large scale could be fatal to mankind in an age when technology has broken the barriers of space and sound and made the whole world interdependent.

Denial of human rights to people on one hand, can lead to stagnation or rebellion. On the other hand, as is the case of the United States, when people are given freedom to express themselves, fantastic strides are made towards building a good life in a good society. This reality was recognized by the United Nations and resulted in the proclamation of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Ethnic groups in America have always been sensitive to the issue of human or civil rights, the denial of which was often a cause of their being in America. They are concerned first of all with the civil rights issues here in America, where they live and sometimes were discriminated against, and also in their ancestral homelands. By being sensitive to human rights as individuals, communities, or nations, we contribute to the future well-being of all people in a world which more than ever before in history depends on the good will and empathy of all people.

Bridge questions

1. Ask the students how long it took to cross the Atlantic 100 years ago and how long it takes today
2. Ask the students what their reactions are when they learn that their friends can watch any program on T.V. that they wish to while their own parents forbid them to watch certain programs.

LITHUANIANS FOR A FREE LITHUANIA

President Wilson's famous Fourteen Points, proclaiming the right of self-determination for all nations, great and small, was presented to a joint session of the United States Congress on January 8, 1918. The event brought great excitement to the Lithuanian community, which had long labored in the cause of Lithuania's independence. Sensing that the time was right for a concerted effort, Lithuanian Catholic and Nationalist Organizations sent 1101 delegates to a convention held in New York's Madison Square Garden on March 13, 1918. The convention drew several resolutions, the principal one demanding complete independence for Lithuania in a democratically governed state embracing all its ethnographic areas. The New York press reacted favorably informing the English-speaking public of Lithuania's desire for freedom and complete disassociation from Poland.

In the meantime, on February 16, 1918, the Lithuanian Council in Vilnius proclaimed the nation's full independence, severing all previous ties to other nations with whom military or economic alliances had been established.

Coordinating their efforts with those of their countrymen in Lithuania, the Lithuanian American Council approached the United States State Department on April 26, 1918. The Council asked for a statement of recognition of Lithuania's independence in order to lessen Russian, German and Polish interference in Lithuania's internal affairs. This failing, the Council decided to seek the assistance of President Wilson himself who received the delegation on May 3. Wilson expressed agreement with the national aims of the Lithuanian people but otherwise made no committment. The Council sensed that they had reached an impasse. Wilson and his Secretary of State, Lansing, seemed to hold firm to the idea of Russia's indivisibility.

Lithuanian Americans tried to influence the negotiations taking place at the Paris Peace Conference by bombarding the American delegations in Paris and London with petitions and having their own representatives on the scene. The signing of the peace treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919 left the fate of the Baltic states undecided, except that the treaty did bind Germany to withdraw its military forces from Lithuania and to refrain from interfering with any defense organization that the temporary governments of Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania might judge necessary. In effect it also endorsed the dismemberment of Russia to which Lithuania had been annexed since 1795.

Beginning on April 23, 1919, during the Peace Conference, a massive six-month propaganda campaign was organized out of New York to make the Lithuanian quest for independence part of the consciousness of the American public. A Lithuanian Liberty Bell was even built and unveiled and rung on June 9 in a Chicago auditorium before a crowd of 4000 before being sent on a year-long tour across the country where all could have the opportunity to strike it at five dollars a stroke.

While this publicity was going on in the United States, Lithuanians in Lithuania were attempting to defend themselves against renewed attempts at occupation by alternatively Germans, Russians and Poles.

All during 1920, Lithuanians in the United States continued their petitions, meetings and demonstrations and the sending of delegations to Washington in their efforts to get American recognition for an independent

Lithuania. While they failed to get the support of President Wilson and the State Department, they nevertheless gained advocates among several prominent politicians.

Finally, with the election of 1920 and the appearance of a new Republican administration, new hopes filled the Lithuanian community. On May 30, 1921 a six man delegation was received by President Harding and Secretary of State Hughes accompanied by several prominent citizens and politicians. The Lithuanian delegates presented their appeal accompanied by a petition with over a million signatures. President Harding assured the delegation that the Lithuanian question would be given serious consideration. At this, the movement for recognition began to gain momentum winning support from Congressmen and several members of the President's own Cabinet.

Finally, on July 25, 1922 Secretary of State Hughes sent word to the United States Commissioner to the Baltic Provinces, Young, to notify the Foreign Ministers of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on July 28 that the three countries had been granted recognition by the United States. Lithuanians in Lithuania, New York and Philadelphia jubilantly celebrated their victory. With the recognition of Lithuania the work of the Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Council—and the Lithuanian Lobby—was completed.

Suggested activities

Class discussion: have the students name the rights that are guaranteed to residents of the United States by the Constitution. Write them down in notebooks or on the blackboard—freedom of religion, of the press, of assembly, etc. Choose at random one of the rights mentioned and pretend that it has been abolished. Ask students to speculate on what might happen: Would their daily lives be any different? If so, how? Would any of the things that they see around them everyday disappear?

How do they feel about that right which has been abolished now? Does it suddenly seem more important than it did before?

Evaluation

1. In what ways did Lithuanians in America help their homeland to obtain its independence?
2. What country ruled Lithuania before 1918?
3. Why was recognition of Lithuania's independence by the United States important?

Related topics: Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Political asylum Theme: Contributions

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. relate the story of Simas Kudirka's escape from the Soviet Union.

SIMAS KUDIRKA

On November 23, 1970, United States Coast Guard cutter Vigilant and Soviet Russian fishing ship Sovetskaya Litva were docked side by side near Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts.

A radio operator, Simas Kudirka, on the Russian ship, realizing an opportunity to fulfill a lifetime wish of fleeing from Soviet oppression, jumped onto the Vigilant and asked for asylum. The Coast Guard officials ignored Simas' pleas for help as the Russian authorities came aboard, beat him and dragged him back to the ship. The Russian ship departed and the Vigilant's crew was told to remain silent.

Fortunately three fishermen, Robert Brieze, Howard Nickerson and John Burt were not silent and proceeded to relate the entire Kudirka incident to the newspapers. The United States' government was shocked at the behavior of the Vigilant's commanding officer, Rear Admiral W. B. Ellis and consequently dismissed him. Also, the United States' policy of political asylum was revised.

On May 20, 1971, the Soviet court passed a sentence of ten years imprisonment on Kudirka. He was sent to Siberia, to a hard labor camp. With the publicity and Lithuanian Americans' anger, it was found that Kudirka's mother was born in Brooklyn, New York, thereby claiming Kudirka a United States citizen. Several Congressmen then aided in obtaining permission for Kudirka to be freed from Soviet imprisonment.

On November 5, 1974, Simas Kudirka and his family arrived in New York; since then they have traveled through the United States to inform the people of present conditions in Soviet-occupied Lithuania.

THE RIGHT TO SELF-EXPRESSION

RETENTION OF ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG AMERICAN LITHUANIANS

Related topics:

Indo-European languages
Linguistics

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

TOPIC: THE TIES THAT BIND

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. relate why the Lithuanian language is important, not only to Lithuanians, but also to other people whose own languages derive from Indo-European origins.

How this topic relates to the theme of multi-culturalism

Two of the most important factors in binding an ethnic group together and providing it with a sense of identity are religion and language. For most ethnic groups religion and language are closely interwoven and cannot be easily separated. In some cases ethnic identity was expressed by other means. All Roman Catholics, for example, used the Latin language in religious observances. But different ethnic groups sometimes practiced different rites, rituals and customs even though the language of worship was identical. Eventually these differences in the outward form or expression of belief were more important to a particular ethnic group than the common language they shared with others during worship.

We often think of language in utilitarian terms: language as a means of communication between human beings. But there is more to language than sound. In certain respects language is like religion. It is a mirror which reflects our innermost perceptions and understandings. Would there be humanity without language?

Mankind, with all its fantastic achievements in science and technology, has made little progress in answering such fundamental questions as: what is the meaning of life? Perhaps there is no rational explanation to that question. Life is a gift and people have expressed their appreciation for that gift in celebration. Another word for that "act of celebration" is "religion." Religion and language, human expressions of the celebration and consciousness of life, rank at the top of human values.

The Founding Fathers of this country were aware of the basic values of religion and language to a meaningful, human life. That is why the First Amendment to the Constitution was introduced: not to suppress religious expression but to protect individuals and their right to worship as they pleased. Neither does the United States Constitution single out one language as mandatory for the whole nation. (The use of the English language is based on custom, not on federal laws.) The Constitution serves as a kind of written guarantee, assuring certain freedoms which are vital to a meaningful, human life.

THE LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE

Lithuanian is a member of the Indo-European family of languages spoken throughout Europe and India. Languages as diverse today as Hindi, Iranian, Armenian, Greek, Russian, Albanian, English, Spanish and Welsh are all related to each other by means of a common ancestry dating back anywhere from 5000 to 3500 B.C. All of the languages of Europe, except Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian and Lappish (themselves related to each other and called the Finno-Urgric language family), and Basque (spoken in northern Spain) are members of the Indo-European group.

Within Europe, the six major Indo-European language groups are Baltic, Celtic, Germanic, Hellenic, Italic and Slavic. Each group consists of many languages which are themselves made up of many different dialects. Lithuanian, itself consisting of several dialects, is part of the Baltic family group, whose other member is Latvian. Old Prussian, which died out in the 17th century, was also a Baltic language.

The special significance of Lithuanian as a language for scholars of Indo-European languages is its extreme conservatism. This means that while other Indo-European languages have changed considerably through the years, Lithuanian has remained remarkably stable. Thus, many of the forms of Lithuanian recorded in the 17th century, for example, give an insight as to what unrecorded earlier forms of other Indo-European languages were like. The ancient recorded languages: Greek, Latin and especially Sanskrit, the ancestral language of present day Hindi, Urdu, and other Indian languages, the records of which date back to about 1100 B.C.

But not only the Lithuanian language, but Lithuania itself, is of significance to Indo-Europeanists because it is one of the areas that has been suggested as a possible homeland of the original Indo-Europeans. One way scholars have tried to determine where the original homeland was has been by comparing those words in the various Indo-European languages that are cognate, that is, were part of the common vocabulary that the later Indic, Hellenic, Italic, Slavic, Germanic, Baltic, Celtic groups shared as Indo-Europeans before their separation and migration to different places. So we know, because words for the names of the four seasons are cognate that the original Indo-European homeland had to have been in a temperate zone and because there is no common word for sea, that it had to be inland. Common words for various animals (wolf, bear), trees and plants, as well as the absence of common words for other animals (lion, tiger), suggest the Baltic area as a likely candidate for the original homeland within Continental Europe. Other areas of course have also been suggested, but the kind of words that are cognate among Indo-European languages, and the extreme conservatism of the Lithuanian language (suggesting geographical as well as linguistic stability) make Lithuania an excellent possibility as the original Indo-European homeland.

Suggested activities

Ask if any children in the classroom know other languages, besides English. Also ask students to identify their religious affiliation. Now, discuss with them the meaning of the diversity of answers. Were they denied education at public expense because of their religious beliefs? Are they forbidden to converse in public places in languages other than English? Suppose that they were forbidden to go to school because of their religion or were arrested because they talked in a foreign language in the street? Let the students speculate on how many people in America would be deprived of education and serve sentences in jail under such conditions. To demonstrate the point, ask those students who have identified themselves as belonging to a religious denomination and those who can speak another language to leave their desks and stand by the wall. Ask if the children who have remained seated if they would really want all their standing classmates to leave the school

Evaluation

1. What are the major Indo-European language groups?
2. Why is Lithuania and its language important to scientists who want to study the origins of most European languages?

Related topics:

Religious freedom

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. identify the prominent religious denominations among Lithuanians;
2. describe the way in which religious institutions serve the community.

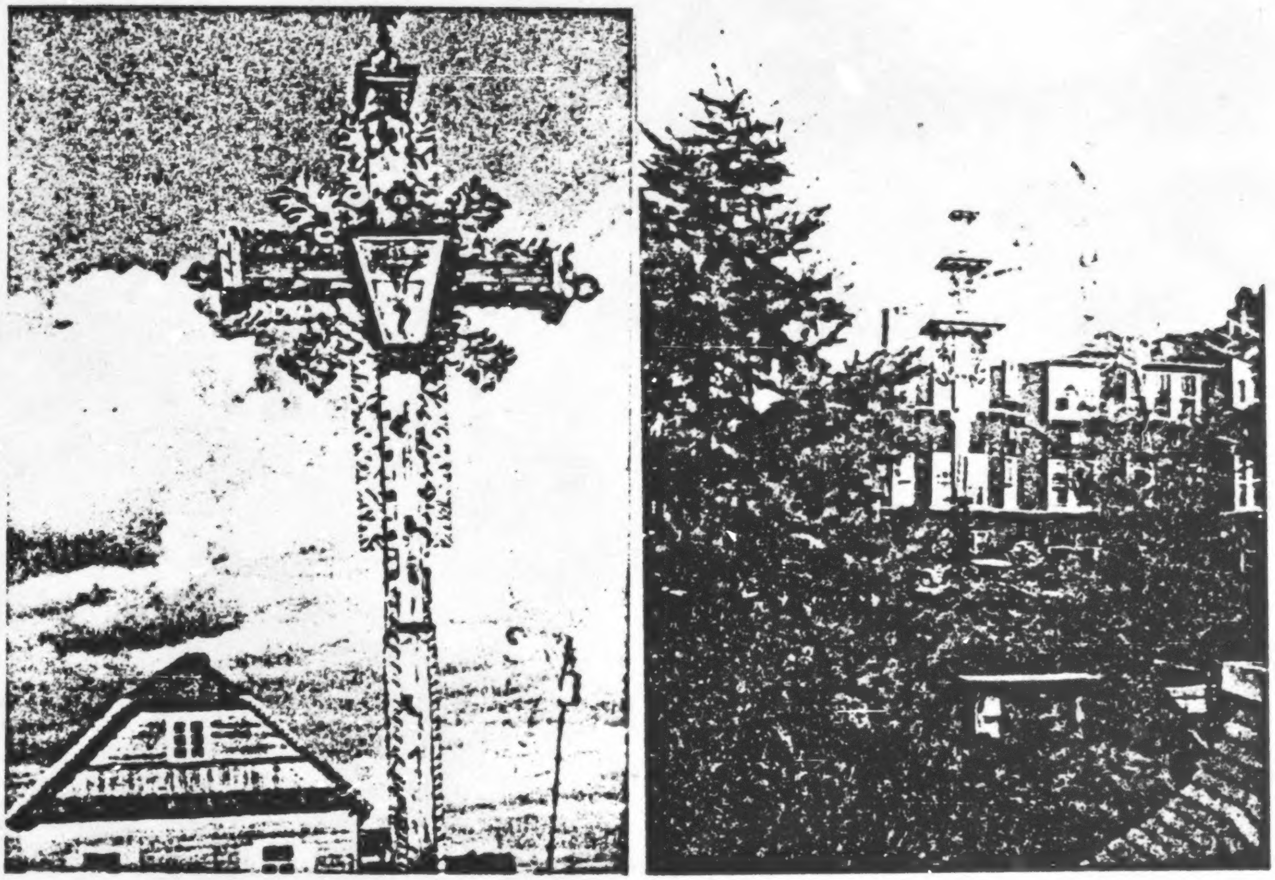
LITHUANIAN RELIGIOUS TIES

The predominant Lithuanian religion is Roman Catholic. There are many parishes and organizations that are tied with this religion. However, there are Protestant Lithuanian parishes also.

Most important for Lithuanians in Chicago is the Jesuit Fathers Community Center located in the Marquette Park area. All organizations use this center for their meetings. Most of the public events are held here and a newsletter is published to announce all engagements. Roman Catholic services are held in the Chapel and afterwards the congregation gathers in the "cafe" to talk informally over a cup of coffee.

Such centers are also found in Cleveland, Toronto, New York, Detroit, and many other cities where the Lithuanian colony wishes to maintain a common ground for Lithuanian events.

Beginning with Soviet occupation in 1944, Lithuanians were deprived of freedom of religion. Churches were converted into storage houses and museums while others were closed. Catholic papers were confiscated. Catholic organizations were disbanded. However, an underground paper, "The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," publishes information of arrests that have been made concerning any religious persecution.



Carved wooden crosses

in Lithuania and in Chicago

Related topics:

Supplemental education
Alternative education

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

Behavioral objective

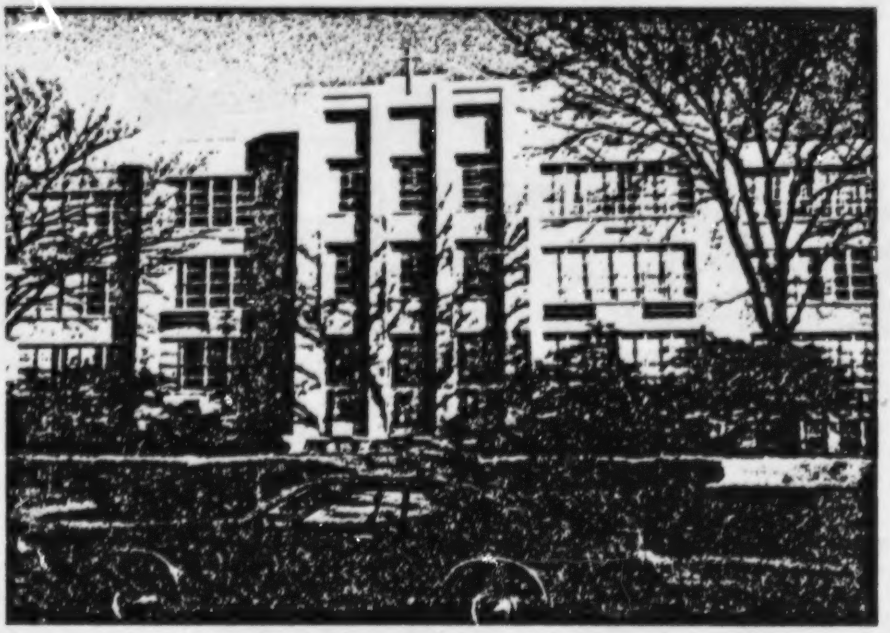
The student should be able to

1. name one kind of educational activity in the Lithuanian community;
2. tell why Lithuanians felt the need for Saturday schools.

LITHUANIAN EDUCATION—THE SATURDAY SCHOOLS

The Saturday Schools of Lithuanistic studies are a relatively recent phenomenon in Lithuanian community life. They were started in 1948-50 by the many newcomers, arriving from the refugee camps in Germany, who felt that the existing Lithuanian education offered by parochial schools was inadequate. The Saturday School supplemental education for Lithuanian pupils flourished. The Lithuanian Community Council on Education reported that in 1966-67 school year there were forty-three Saturday Schools at an elementary level, with 3,199 pupils, three kindergartens with 89 pupils, two Lithuanian language classes in Lutheran Evangelical parishes with 144 pupils, five secondary schools (Boston, Brooklyn, Cleveland and two in Chicago), and 62 students attending the Pedagogical Institute of Lithuanistics in Chicago, which since 1968 has devoted its attention to the training of the instructors for the Saturday Schools.

Lithuanian studies are also promoted by a number of Institutes, Academies, Societies, and Museums, such as the Institute of Lithuanian Studies (Chicago), The Lithuanian Catholic Academy of Sciences with several branches, the Lithuanian Language Society (Chicago), the Lithuanian World Archives (Chicago), The Lithuanian American Cultural Archives (Putnam, Connecticut), The Lithuanian Folk Dance Institute (Chicago), The Library of Lithuanian Musicology (Chicago), and the Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago.



Santa Maria Lithuanian High School in Chicago

Related topics: Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Private education Theme: Contributions

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the development of Lithuanian parish schcols in America.

LITHUANIAN EDUCATION—THE PARISH SCHOOLS

The need to keep their young people within the Lithuanian community and parish prompted the Lithuanian pastors of the first immigration to create parochial schools. One of the obstacles they faced, however, was the lack of qualified teachers, either lay teachers or nuns since convents in Lithuanian had been abolished long ago by the Czarist government. Since pastors themselves had to assume the role of teachers thus taking time off from their main duty of running parishes, Fathers Milukas, Kaupas and Staniukynas set about establishing a Lithuanian order of nuns who would teach in the parochial schools. Through their efforts, three Sisters took their vows on August 30, 1907, thus becoming the first members of the Lithuanian Congregation of Saint Casimir. They were immediately assigned to the Mount Carmel parish school where Father Staniukynas was pastor. The motherhouse was established in Chicago in 1911, and from then the number of Sisters grew rapidly. Twenty-five years later, the Casimirites were in charge of twenty-five parish schools and two academies and by 1973 had a membership of 405 Sisters staffing two high schools, 33 elementary schools, three foreign mission schools, two hospitals, and two homes for the ages.

A second women's religious order, that of Saint Francis, was established in Pittsburgh in 1922 and also flourished. By 1961 the Franciscan Sisters were conducting twenty-two grade schools (six of them non-Lithuanian), four high schools and fifteen religious instruction centers. In 1972 they were in charge of twelve parish schools and the girls' academy connected with the motherhouse. They were also teaching in four of the newly consolidated elementary schools, and five district high schools.

Later, more Sisterhoods were developed. For instance, by 1974, the Sisters of Jesus Crucified presided over classrooms in ten parish schools and one academy.

Statistics on the number of Lithuanian parochial schools gathered in 1933 show that thirty-nine, or 46% of the eighty-eight parishes at the time had their own schools with a total enrollment of Lithuanian children of 10,257. By 1951, there were fifty-four Lithuanian parish schools with 11,140 pupils, including 2000 children of recent arrivals and 3,554 or 32% who were non-Lithuanian. In the ten Lithuanian parish high schools, 1178 pupils came from families of post-World War II settlement, of whom 724 or 61% were non-Lithuanians. By 1957, total enrollment in sixty-one parish elementary schools was 15,150 and in twelve high schools 2,240. But because of the rising percentage of non-Lithuanian children in the schools, and the American-trained teachers' insufficient preparation in Lithuanian subjects, Lithuanian studies assumed less and less importance or were entirely eliminated from the curriculum, thus nullifying one of the main reasons for establishing Lithuanian parish schools in the first place.

Source: Dr. Antanas Kucas, Lithuanians in America, Encyclopedia Lituanica, 1975, p. 208-209.

Related topics:

Lithuanian legation in Washington
Lithuanian American Council

Ethnic group: Lithuanians

Theme: Relationship to homeland

Behavioral objective

The student should be able to

1. describe the purpose of Lithuanian publications in the English language.

LITHUANIAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PUBLICATIONS

Lithuania's political situation has been that of a small country in the midst of larger powers (Russia, Poland, Germany), threatened by the ever-present danger of being overrun and incorporated by one or the other. Such has been the history of Lithuania from its official union with Poland in 1596 to the present, except for the period 1920-1939. It stands to reason that Lithuania's political reality has forced it to seek the assistance of stronger powers if it was going to survive as an independent nation. Lithuanians have had to reach out beyond the boundaries of their country, or outside of their immigrant communities, to enlist the support of others for their cause of independence. This "reaching out" traditionally has been through written publications but in more recent years through the means of radio and television.

Among the first Lithuanian publications to appear in the English language were A Plea for the Lithuanians (later Lithuanian Review) and The Lithuanian Booster, renamed Lithuania in 1924. They were founded during the first World War when the Lithuanians were attempting to obtain United

States' recognition of Lithuania as an independent nation, which, after much lobbying, the United States officially granted on July 28, 1922.

Between 1940 and 1956, when Lithuania itself was again occupied by the Russians, and subsequently by the Germans and then the Russians once again, the Lithuanian Legation in Washington published the Lithuanian Situation, a bulletin containing news, important statements and articles on the subjugation of Lithuania. It was circulated among embassies, legislators, editors, and libraries. In New York between 1943 and 1951, the Lithuanian American Council published a similar periodical, called the Lithuanian Bulletin. Between 1953 and 1971, the Freedom Committees of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania published the Baltic Review in New York, which dealt with the history, culture and political problems of the Soviet-enslaved Baltic states. Additionally, each February 16, when Lithuanian Independence Day is celebrated, a special program on Lithuania is communicated to the American public through the various media. An annual report (since 1971) is published by the Lithuanian American Community during the Lithuanian Independence Day Commemoration called "The Violations of Human Rights in Soviet Occupied Lithuania" which documents cases of suppression and cites trials of dissidents in Lithuania.

Not all Lithuanian English language publications, however, focus entirely on political issues. For example, the periodical Viltis (Hope), published in Denver, Colorado, also treats folklore and Lithuanian studies, and the Lithaunian Students' Association of the United States began in 1954 to publish its quarterly Lituanus dealing with art, literature, history and Lithuanian culture in general.